IN THE SHADOW OF HISTORY

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Dedication to,

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PREFACE

The book is a collection of articles which were published in the different newspapers from time to time. The response from readers always encourages me to write more. I am thankful to all those who appreciated and criticized my writings. I acknowledge my deep gratitude to Jalis Hazir, Murtaza Razvi, Rashid Malik and Anita Mir for their valuable assistance and cooperation. Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Zuhoor Ahmad Khan and Rana Abdur Rehman, the publishers, for publishing the book so beautifully.

Mubarak Ali

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TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING HISTORY

USES OF HISTORY

Whenever a nation is in a state of disintegration, history is called upon to help it unite. Although there are problems in incorporating separate groups into one unit, history makes an attempt to search the cultural and social roots and link them together and provide basis for unity.

The concept of nationhood is not only relevant to most of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa, but to most advanced countries such as Britain, Germany, and USA.

In most of the underdeveloped countries, the ruling classes, in order to legitimate their rule, use history to exploit the patriotism of the people and exhort them to love their country and sacrifice their lives in its defence.

The irony is that the past which is reconstructed to appeal to the people to be united as one nation is the past of the conquerors, generals, and victors, and not the past of the intellectuals, scientists, and scholars. The choice is very important because it determines the fate of a nation either to

choose hostility, violence, and terror, or peace, love, and harmony. The path of violence and terror always leads to authoritarian and tyrannical forms of government, while peace and love pave the way for democracy and a composite society.

We have the recent example of Germany which followed Bismarck and Kaisar Wilhelm's traditions and ignored the views of Liebknecht and Bebel; consequently it ended in wars and destruction.

Even such modern and advanced nations as Britain and USA are using history to reconstruct the past in such a way as to solve their current problems and to inject a false sense of pride by hiding their crimes. Thatcher, as prime minister of Britain, supported the revival of self-sacrifice, self-reliance, self-respect, and pride in the country. She once said that instead of writing history as centuries of unrelieved gloom, oppression, and failure, as days of hopelessness, historians should write a history which gives courage and confidence to the people. To accomplish this object, history as an independent subject, is incorporated in the national curriculum of schools.

In the USA, once a secretary of education known as William Benett said: "The study of history is to give our students a grasp of their nation. (A nation that the study of history and current events will reveal is still, indeed, the last, best hope on earth.")

How to use history in Pakistan to create a national identity is a very important question. History can be used to inspire people to strive to become one nation; but of course, history alone cannot accomplish that task of solving all basic problems such as education, health, poverty and shelter; it requires other forces, social, political and economic, to change the exploitative structure of the society. Only then history can promote the cause of nation-building. Leaving all these basic problems unsolved, neither the sentiments nor rationality of the people can be appealed to, to forget their deprivation and join hands with their oppressors.

The other important factor, in case of Pakistan, is that on what bases do we want to begin the process of nation-building? To create a sense of patriotism after exploiting the sentiments of people or to appeal to their humanist feelings? In this case, we have to change the whole interpretation of history. Here, instead of emphasising political history, we must concentrate on social history. There is a vast difference between two kinds of histories. Political history is mostly used by the dictators and tyrants to further their ambitions because it can easily be used to mobilise people by exploiting their hidden sentiments of hostility and hatred. Social history on the contrary represents common cultural and social values which bring people together.

The best example is the history of Indo-Pak relations. The political history, by highlighting the role of two governments, creates hostile feelings among the people of both countries. The social history, on the other hand, brings to light the cultural similarities and strengthens mutual relations. Political history, moreover, works within borders while social history knows no borders and helps to eradicate strangeness, alienation and separateness among groups, societies, and nations, with the result that cultural links become stronger than the political prejudices.

Further the domain of political history is the study of the state and its institutions; social history, on the contrary, concentrates on the activities of the society and the people and thus provides to the historians broader and more fascinating aspects to study. This is the reason that social history, which represents people, has become more popular than political history.

WHY SHOULD WE STUDY HISTORY

Why should we study history? What are its uses and what role can it play in our lives? Those who are not historically conscious usually ask these questions; they regard the past as if it had nothing to do with the present.

The fact is that nowadays history, along with other social sciences, is emerging as a dynamic subject to respond to the challenges of the present and helping to overpower the social, political, and economic crisis. History tells us that no society can remain static and that it changes with the passage of time. The change is the basic factor which should be studied in history.

Whenever there is change, the society faces new challenges. Challenge and response, in view of Toynbee, push the society towards progress. Therefore, it is the task of history to make people conscious of change.

In our society, we do not study history to understand the process of change but just to entertain ourselves with past events. For this reason, history is not regarded as a useful subject. The history that we teach in our educational institutions is political history and, as such, it is used by the ruling classes.

The other aspect of history in our society is didactic. It is written and studied out of religious devotion and is used in religious discussions to support some sectarian point of view. Thus, the limited political and religious use reduces the scope and credibility of history.

Our society is divided into cultural, religious, ethnical, and social groups. History can provide these different groups a common link to unite and will provide them an identity. The gap of indifference and ignorance which is deep and wide among the classes, castes, *biradries*, and tribes, can be narrowed and finally wiped out through the information of history.

For example, our knowledge of the wandering tribes of Pakistan is very limited. We do not know much about their language, culture, and history. This ignorance makes us prejudiced against their habits and way of life. If through history their origin is dug out and reconstructed this would provide them their own identity. Identity makes them respectable in society. The beauty of their culture helps to remove all prejudices and stops the discrimination. The same is true of any religious sect or any cultural and ethnic group. The study of their history and culture helps them to have a dignified place in the society.

History can play a very important role in uniting scattered and fragmented groups and creating in them a sense of nationhood. Specially our society which is a conglomeration of many castes, tribes, and groups, needs a common cultural link to unite them together.

At present, we are living in a shrunken world which is further becoming smaller and smaller. To live in peace and harmony, prejudices against nations should be rooted out. Again, history can be used to cleanse the minds of hatred. One of the weaknesses of our society is to judge other societies and their culture with our outlook and, after finding contradictions, reject them without understanding their origin.

For example, we always look down upon Hindu rituals and Hindu cultural values. Some of them are even regarded as obscene. But the study of ancient history reveals the origin of these rituals and their evolutionary development and makes them not only acceptable but respectable. The rituals, festivals, ethical values, laws, and habits are the product of historical process in every society. Thus history reveals their original shape after discovering their evolutionary process.

In this way history not only removes prejudices but provides us immense information to broaden our outlook. History cannot decide which religion is true and which is false. In its domain every religion has its historical importance. Religion and history are two separate disciplines and should remain independent one from the other.

There was a time when the known world was used to be very limited. A man who was born in a village or a city, spent the whole of his life in his limited surroundings. Beyond it, the world was unknown to him, shrouded in mysteries. Nów the life has completely changed. The world has widened tremendously and the means of communication have brought the whole world closer. Nations and cultures are mixing with each other.

Now, it is a task of history to provide information about different countries and peoples and to project such aspects which could harmonise their relations. Actually, history is the study of man and his activities. It does not recognise any race and colour. It is man who is the focus of its studies and man is everywhere the same. This humanistic approach of history not only removes perjudices but creates love and respect for every nation.

The importance of history is further increased because it keeps the records of collective memory and preserves all the important events which happened in the past. This record keeps the continuity of people's existence and makes them conscious of their ancient origin.

In our society, history is written as partly dealing with the ruling classes, and the cultural and social history of the people is neglected. The result is that the ruling classes use it for their own ends. Collectively people have short memory and only through history they become conscious of the past activities of the politician and political parties.

If history fails to record or provide information, it is soon forgotten and the same politicians and political parties come in power again and again.

The study of history makes a society self-conscious, and helps it to determine its position in the comity of nation. This is how history can play an important role in our society.

WHAT IS GRASSROOTS HISTORY?

As societies are democratising and the people's participation is increasing in all affairs, the scope of history is also broadening. History no longer serves the rulers and the elite, but comes down to help the common people to emphasise their role in day-to-day life.

Some non-academic historians of Germany have given a new dimension to history which they called grassroots history. Its focus is on discovering the everyday life of Germany by using the methodology of oral history. The first attempt was made to reconstruct life in the Third Reich, the recent past. There are a number of people who are still alive and remember life during Hitler's time. With the help of their interviews, discussions and talks, the historians have unearthed those aspects of life which were avoided by the official historians.

As a result of this attempt, a new kind of history has emerged which is different from official and academic history. Official history is based on state papers, archives, documents, and so-called authentic sources. History based on this source material, represents the official point of view. Keeping in view its limitation, one can easily understand its narrow approach towards the society and how it justifies official policies. In short, it looks at history from above.

Alternative history, on the other hand, represents what Lefebvre called "history from below." Here the historians narrate the experience of an individual who tells his story in a simple and lucid manner and depicts the life of a common man. As the account of the individual depends on his experience of the present, the past interpreted in its light. But it is not selected, classified and elitist, but broad and wide, covering all aspects of life.

This kind of history-writing provides an opportunity to comprehend the recent past. The daily life of the common people is portrayed and it includes everything such as price of commodities, housing, traffic, crimes, foods, games, recreation, family life, state of education, health, agriculture,

taxation, clubs, habit of book-reading and relations with neighbours, etc.

In Pakistan, there is a great need to write a grassroots history in order to understand the change in society. The history of daily life during Ayub Khan, Z.A. Bhutto, and Zia can be a fascinating study. How did changes take place during these periods? How did the normal values deteriorate within such a short span of time? Did the society decline further or stabilise? These and other such questions may be traced in the accounts of individuals who experienced the ups and downs during these periods.

There is no doubt that history is a continuous process and the historians divide it in order to understand it, but the division is important because we can easily discern change in society and understand the process of history.

Therefore, history is a useful tool for the politicians, reformers, and concerned people to comprehend the changing pattern of a society and pinpoint the social problems. Alternative history provides this chance because it emerges from the hearts of the people, that is why in this history there is pathos, tribulations, and sufferings, it also represents people's will, courage, and persistence showing how the long tyrannical rules failed to subdue them. The will to live and survive remains strong and prevails over iron rule.

HOW SHOULD HISTORY BE READ?

Every historian writes history with his own point of view. His likes and dislikes are mirrored in his writings. Moreover, every history is written in a certain atmosphere and under certain circumstances which affect not only the description but its explanation.

For a reader, it is imperative to keep in mind two things before reading a history book. The first and the foremost is: who is the historian? The knowledge and information about the historian will enable the reader to know his prejudices and predilections to understand his interpretation.

For example, in the early period, most of the historians were courtiers. Keeping in view their position, one can easily form an opinion about their views. The court historians could not dared to criticise either the ruler or the government. He chose events in order to glorify the rule of his patron-king. Even his weaknesses were presented as merits. For example, Shams Siraj Afif, a famous historian of Firuz Shah's period, in his "Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi", eulogised the character of the king. Not mentioning the corruption during his reign, he wrote that once a soldier could not present his horse for the review as he did not have enough money to offer bribery to the officer. When the king came to know the plight of the soldier, he was moved and called the soldier and gave him one ashrafi.

After the review, the king asked the soldier whether his horse was successfully reviewed. The soldier replied that after giving bribery to the officer he got his horse cleared. The king was relieved and said, "Thanks God."

Firuz Shah was a weak king and could not take strong measures against his enemies. This weakness of the king became, for the court historians, a noble quality. They argued that he did not take any military action because he abhorred war and bloodshed. The fact, however, was that he never hesitated to kill his opponents once they were overpowered.

Now the reader can easily find out the real situation prevailing during the rule of Firuz Shah. There was rampant

corruption in the administration and the king was so weak that he was incapable of rooting it out. When he failed to take action against his strong opponents it meant that he was not a capable general.

On the other hand, there were historians who were not patronised by the court, such as Ziauddin Barni and Abdul Qadir Badauni. Both were deprived of royal patronage and grieved that their talents were not recognised. In reaction, both of them severely criticised their contemporary rulers. The reader can easily see the contrast in the writings of Abul Fazl, the court historian, who glorified the personality of Akbar, while Badauni found all sorts of weaknesses in him.

The second important thing to note is in what period and time was the history written? For example the history of the Umayyids was not written when the dynasty was in power. It was written during the Abbasids who outsted and replaced them. Similarly, the history of the Suri dynasty was written when the Mughals were ruling India. This was the reason that neither the Umayyids nor the Suris could find a sympathetic historian to defend them. Whenever Abul Fazl referred to Sher Shah, he called him Sher Khan which meant a tribal leader and not a king. Similarly, he referred to Hemu as a Baqqal (petty shopkeeper) and ignored his qualities as a general and administrator. His defeat deprived him of a dignified place in history.

The historians of the reigning dynasties either condemned or ignored the defeated rulers. Ibrahim Lodhi, after the battle of Panipat, was painted by the Mughal historians as an incapable and weak ruler in order to justify the rule of the Mughals. They just ignored the fact that Babur was an aggressor who declared war against him without provocation and Ibrahim Lodhi died valiantly defending his kingdom and honour.

When contemporary historians distort history it becomes difficult for future historians to reconstruct the history. Hajjaj bin Yusuf became bloodthirsty, cruel, and savage, according to the Abbasid historians who ignored all his positive

contributions. The result is that even today he is known as he was portrayed by his opponents.

Even modern history is not free from this weakness. In Indian historiography, these weaknesses can easily be found. The history which was written under the East Indian Company justified their conquests and their rule over India. The annexation of the Indian states was right as their rulers were debauched and perverted. The events of 1857 were called the Mutiny and when it was called War of Independence by Savarkar and published his book on this topic, it was immendiately banned.

If a reader keeps these points in his mind, it would be easy for him to understand history.

WRITING OF CURRENT HISTORY

It has always been difficult to write on current history as the people are greatly involved in it. Even the historians cannot claim to be impartial or objective. The great German historian Mommsen rightly remarks, "those who are lived through historical events begin to see that history is neither written nor made without love or hate", Gibbon, the prominent English historian, wanted to write the history of some of the famous English personalities such as Richard I, or the Black Prince, or Sir Walter Releigh, but soon he realized that "every reader is a friend or enemy". So he chose to write on a distant historical topic of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. A similar example we find in the Indian historiography. Jadunath Sarkar first contemplated to write on 1857, but he also realized that writing on such a critical and recent even might be unpleasant to the British Government. Therefore, he abondoned the project and decided to write on Aurangzeb.

The historians of Pakistan (very few are left) are facing the same problem in writing of current history. The history of Pakistan is so recent that the people are emotionally involved in it which made them prejudiced and intolerant to read anything against their views.. They are not ready to recognize their mistakes and correct them; instead they insist on the righteousness of their actions.

The history which was written just after 1947 was in the rhythm of Hindu-Muslim conflict. This view of history is forcibly imposed and even today no one is allowed to write anything against it. The social and legal pressures are applied to introduce this version of history and wide publicity is used to popularize it. The result is that the young generation is completely ignorant to the other version of history. They don't know much about the role of the Congress party, the Ghadar movement, the Mutiny of the Indian Navy, and the Telangana movement. They are not aware of the role which was played by Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, and Subhash Chandar Boss against the British colonialism. Even the nationalist Muslim leaders and Ulema are neglected and never mentioned in our text books.

The later development in the history of Pakistan fragmented the society and different political, religious, and social groups emerged with insular outlook. The absence of the democratic process undermined the peoples role in making history and the image of political leaders as heroes, saviours, and redeemers is projected with such a vigour that if any attempt is made to judge them on scientific grounds it is not allowed and great hue and cry is made. Some years ago, a teacher of Karachi University critized the historical role of the late Agha Khan which brought a wrath of the Agha Khan community and the termination of the teacher was demanded. The result of the pressure is that history is narrated and not analysed. What happened in history is fully detailed but why it happened is not discussed.

Another trend which damanded the history writing is that different political and religious groups started to produce their own version of history with specific purpose to brainwash their followers. This type of history is written with emotional political slogans. Distortion of the facts is the characteristic of these history writing. They believed in the principal that "when you don't like the past, change it." The result is that history has become a political tool in the hands of these groups to use it for the projection of the party's image. The social, cultural, and economic aspects of the history are totally neglected reducing the history only a register of political events.

Under these circumstances, to write a comprehensive history of Pakistan objectively has become impossible. There are two swords of democles hanging on the heads of the historians; the pressure of the ruling classes to adopt the official version and repeat it again and agains; and the pressure of different political and religious groups to write what they like. Consequently, the writing of the current history has become merely a political propaganda.

In fact, history is a mirror in which a society can see its face but we refuse to admit our mistakes and insist on perfection of our past deeds. Out society failed to produce any historian who can depict our true image and analyse our failure in history. This is the result that we are not learning anything from history.

WRITING OF POLITICAL HISTORY

Political history is greatly misused by the ruling classes to project their image, to misinform the people, and to ridicule their opponents Whenever they are in trouble, they appeal to the past to rescue them. The past glory is revived to calm down the sentiments of the people and persuade them to endure all hardships in the name of nationalism and patriotism.

A Portugese historian Corde de Fichalho, writing about this phenomenon in 1898, says, "Perhaps one could say that the memory of and pride in these past times of real although transitory greatness is still today one of the main bonds of our nationalism, one of the things which fortified and still fortifies us in those hard times which we later pass through".

In Portugal, during the dictatorship of Salazar, the past glory was used to undermine all opposition against his rule. In most of the Third World countries where dictators come to power, they use this weapon to create a sense of past greatness in the people and use history as an opium to make them imbecile.

Past conquests and victories always thrill a nation and make them ready to revive the process. In Pakistan, politicians, instead of talking about basic problems, urge the people to look towards the past when their forefathers ruled over India. They create an urge in them to hoist the flag on the ramparts of Red Fort. In the euphoria, the people lose their balance, fail to understand the realities, and are easily misled by political slogans. Past glory helps the people to forget their miseries. In a state of backwardness, it gives them a false sense of greatness.

Political history remained a dangerous toll in the hands of kings and tyrants who manipulated and distorted it in order to consolidate their rule and to carry out their policies. The result was that the history written at the court was dominated by the ruling classes containing nothing except the details of their conquests, administration, successions to the throne, and virtues of their character. They tried to suppress evidence to

contradict this account. There are only angels and no demons in the royal historiography.

Modern dictators follow in their footsteps and use political history to justify their rule. All their mistakes are rationalised and all their misdeeds become their virtues. In Pakistan, military dictators fully utilised the past political history in convincing the people that only a powerful man with a strong army could protect them from all external and internal dangers. Thus, the military became a symbol of glory and when it was used, no resistance was made.

Ancient Indian history is fortunate in this respect that there was no court historian who could record the history of the king and the nobility. This allowed the historians of ancient history to use other sources and freely write about the society as a whole. They were not bound by written court histories as were the historians of the medieval India who could not liberate themselves from court chronicles.

In restructuring the history of ancient India, the Indian historians, bereft of written history, are compelled to use other sources which are not dominated by ruling classes. Writing such a history is more interesting than merely narrating political events.

One of the defects of political history is that it is fully dominated by the kings and his nobility and the role of the people is completely neglected. The people are invisible in the process of history. A political history can only be meaningful when the role of the masses is dealt with comprehensively because, in fact, they are the makers of history.

Political history which has lost its credibility can regain its prestige by broadening its vision and by using the new research methodology.

THE CONSPIRACY THEORY OF HISTORY

The favourite approach of the Muslim historians is to deal with historical events according to the conspiracy theory and totally ignore all socio-economic and political factors which play a significant role in the process of history. Though the approach of the conspiracy theory makes the writing of history easy and simple, but it fails to create any understanding of history because no attempt is made to analyse the complexities of events and to find out the root cause of crisis.

For example, in the early history of Islam, all movements which opposed the existing governments are attributed to Jewish conspiracy by the contemporary historians. The Jews emerged as a bunch of conspirators who always tried to destablise the Islamic society and inflicted irreparable losses on Islam. Therefore, according to this approach, the first enemy of the Muslim society were the Jews.

The early Muslim historians accuse Abdullah Ibn Saba as responsible for creating dissension among the Muslim which caused a number of clashes, conflicts, and civil wars. Since then, it is a favourite topic of our political and social historians to see the Jewish conspiracy in every crisis and every movement which was against the status quo and, instead of understanding it comprehensively, only the Jewish factor is regarded responsible for all evils.

With the progress of history, the number of our enemies increased and the followers of Mani, Mazdak, and the religious sects of Ismailis and Qaramatis were actively found conspiring against the Muslim society in the writings of the historians. The number of our enemies further increased when the European nations colonised most of the Muslim countries.

For example, writing the history of European colonisation of India, our historians refer to deceits, fraud, and conspiracy of the British as major reasons of their defeat. The Muslim communalist historians, later on, included the Hindus as an enemy number one who collaborated with the British to overthrow the Muslim rule in India. The hatred against the Hindus became so intense that a separate homeland became the

demand of the Muslim community. After the departure of the British from the subcontinent, the Hindus remain our arch enemy who are constantly conspiring to weaken us. All our historians and political analysts agree that only the Hindus were responsible for the Bangladesh crisis and ultimate humiliation of the Pakistani nation.

If this approach is correct and the Jews, Hindus, and the Europeans successfully conspired against the Muslims and achieved their goals, it appears that the Muslim as a whole were fools and incapable either to understand the tactics of their enemies or to counter them. In fact, this interpretation of history does not only misleads but also greatly hampers our understanding of history by ignoring all socio-economic and political factors and focusing the whole process of history on the conspiracy. The result is that the ruling classes are exonerated from all their misdeeds and crimes and maintain an immaculate image in history.

Very cleverly, this interpretation turns the resentment of the people on the Jews, Hindus, and the Europeans and keeps the ruling class intact and free from all blame. They remain innocent and save themselves from the wrath of the people. Moreover, this approach does not inspire any structural change in the society but accepts the status quo. It further makes the people passive, who find themselves helpless in face of the conspiracy.

To understand the process of history, the right approach is to deal with historical events comprehensively and examine the internal weaknesses of the society, which provide opportunities to external factors to achieve their objectives. The Bangladesh crisis was the product of the misdeeds of West Pakistani ruling classes and not the Hindus. To blame the Hindus for the crisis means absolving our ruling class and hide its crimes. Perhaps that is the reason we never realised the extent of the Bangladesh tragedy and so far have not learned any lesson.

We approach the crisis of Sindh with the same point of view and instead of analysing our own weaknesses, try to find some scapegoat and free our self from all the responsibilities. We can learn from history only when we get rid of the

conspiracy theory and study history comprehensively. Only then can we find out the real enemies who are responsible for our backwardness.

ROMANTICISING THE PAST

It is customary for historians to romanticise the past, especially the history which is written under the influence of religion and nationalism. Such history writing deals only with the role of elites in the society and neglects the deprivation and misery of the people.

For example, in writing the history of the Greeks, rich tributes are paid to Greek philosophers, poets, artists, and dramatists, but everybody ignores the contribution of the Greek slaves who, by doing all the productive work, freed the intellectuals to contribute in art and culture. Without the institution of slavery, the Greek society could not have achieved the progress which dazzled the world.

Historians wonder at the architectural beauty of the Egyptian pyramids, but never bother to investigate the hardships of the thousands of slavemen, women, and children who contributed to building the pyramids. The Egyptian civilisation dazzled the people by its richness but historians rarely point out the other aspect. For example, 110 kilo of gold was used in Tutankhamen's contfin which was equivalent to a month's salary of 35,000 workers.

Similarly, the Industrial Revolution, which brought tremendous changes in the European society, is wholly attributed to scientists and capitalists but the role of the workers who worked 18 hours a day on marginal wages and sacrificed every pleasure and ended their life in poverty, hunger, and misery is neglected. The Industrial Revolution could not be a success without the labour and hard work of the workers.

It is the elitist approach to history that individuals and natural factors are projected and the real role of the masses is ignored. Describing the prosperity of Egypt and Sindh, historians emphasised the role of rivers Nile and Indus. It is said that Egypt is a gift of the Nile and Sindh of the Indus. What they ignore is the role of the peasant who dug the canals and irrigated the waste soil and made the land fertile. Without

their efforts, neither Nile nor Indus could make Eqypt and Sind prosperous

Again it is a wrong view of history when we say that Taj Mahal was built by Shahjanhan. How can we forget the labour and work of those workers, artisans, artists, calligraphers, and architects who contributed to building of the Taj? In an attempt to romanticise the past, our historians proudly write about the fine and beautiful Dhaka muslin. No doubt, it is unbelievable that 40 yards of it could be put in a small-match box. But the historian did not investigate the fate of those weavers who prepared this fine muslin. It is a fact of history that they became blind in their early age. The fate of young carpet-makers is before us. They die young because of consumption and leave behind the beautiful carpets to be admired.

Every fine piece of art which was produced in the past carries a tragic tale. A tale of hunger, poverty, and misery. The slaves, peasants and workers, who contributed to the civilisation of mankind are pushed aside by the court-historians and only the achievements of the elite are highlighted. It is the task of the modern historian to rediscover the role of the downtrodden hidden in the background and present the full image of the age. There is great need to dispel the romanticism of the past, a need to demythologise it; otherwise, it will be repeatedly used by the dictatorial and reactionary forces to get the support of the people. The glory of the past appeals to the people and makes them look backwards rather than forward. The glory of the past keeps them sorted and uncared. The real approach to writing history is not from the above but from the below.

History is not a romantic tale to be read for entertainment. It is full of sorrow and misery. Historians should not deal with only those aspects which are interesting, but deal comprehensively all aspects of society.

WHO MASTERS THE PAST, RULES THE FUTURE

The dictum that anyone who masters the past rules th future perfectly reflects the attitude and behavior of oui society. Our past, from the very beginning of historiography, is controlled by the orthodox and obscurantist historians who interpreted it in such a way as to uphold the status quo and suppress all questions and doubts regarding the role of the ruling classes. The result is that our young generation, unaware of the real past, is nursed on falsehood and lies and, therefore, has become narrow-minded and intolerant.

The knowledge of the past is very important because the roots of our cultural and social traditions lie in it; and without understanding the past, we cannot comprehend the present. But only knowledge of the past is not enough, the most important thing is how to interpret it and in whose interest. To make people conscious of their position or to make them ignorant.

One of the characteristics of our past interpretation is "the glorification of the past". The glittering picture of kings, court, and nobility is given in detail to impress the people. The tales of their generosity, bravery, and patronage give a lesson of submission and passive dependence on the charity and generosity of rich people.

This kind of the past persuades the people to obey those who are in authority and submit to those who wield power. Thus, by creating the dominance of the elite classes, people art exhorted not to disturb the social order because it provides them peace, prosperity and security.

After rulers and nobility, the ulema occupy the important place in our past. The historians highlight their role and collect such events which show their courage and boldness and clearly ignore those ulema who betrayed and accumulated wealth by supporting the unjust acts of the rulers. Because our interpretation of the past favors the ulema, the "legacy of their truthfulness" is fully exploited by their followers in order to hand over all religious powers to them to reform, correct, and guide the society. The young generation, after reading this account, revere them and follow them blindly.

The third important factor of our past is the role of the sufis who are highly praised as deliverers. Sometimes they are placed above the rulers. The irony is that the rulers and the ulema, on the one hand, maintained the exploitative political and social structure intact; while, on the other hand, the sufis, along with their monastries and *durgahs*, curbed all amibition and passion for resistance and transformed the people into complete submission.

This is the past which is interpreted by our historians which is used by our successive ruling classes to their advantage. Any deviation from this interpretation is tantamount to blasphemy and condemned by the rulers, ulema and sufis.

There is a need to reinterpret the past, highlighting the exploitative role of the rulers, the ulema and the sufis, and broadening the scope of the past by including the role of the people. Only this interpretation will create not only consciousness among the people, but guide them to combat those forces who have made them backward generation after generation.

In our society the ruling classes, through their control over education, inject the notion of past greatness into the young generation and keep them unaware of present realities. If this continues, obscurantism, fundamentalism, and fanaticism will rule over the future of this country. As nearly all education and research institutions are controlled by the government, it is well nigh impossible for the enlightened scholars to work independently. They have to interpret the past as wished by their employers. Therefore, there is a need to set up parallel research institutes to reinterpret the whole history from a radical point of view in order to guide the young generation. Without it, our society is doomed.

ALL HISTORY IS CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

History can create an awareness only when it is written in the light of the current situation and the current problems of the society are seen in light of the past history. The purpose of history is not to relate the events of the past, but to relate the account of the past to the present. It is not the task of history to suggest the solution or point out the cure, but to analyse the events objectively and help to promote knowledge and consciousness in society.

History is a vast discipline and contains the whole past, but the historians under the pressure of present problems and grievances, choose those aspects which have either similarity or could be used to inspire the people. For example, there is a time when people like to know the past glory of their race or nation. This desire becomes intense only when the society is in a state of decline and all its energies are sapped by corruption and it loses dignity in the comity of nations. Under these circumstances, the account of the past glory satisfies their ego and conceals their weaknesses.

The Indian Muslims, after 1857, were passing through a period in which their identity was completely undermined by the change of government. They became inferior and their honour and dignity was snatched by the new rulers. To give them a sense of dignity, history was rewritten with an angle as to glorify the past. There was a spate of historical literature in which the contribution of the Muslims to world civilisation was highlighted.

It gave false confidence to the Indian Muslims that the western civilisation owed everything to the Muslims. The Muslim scientists physicians, philosophers, and men of letters, it was said, educated the West. Shibli, Abdul Razzak Kanpuri, and Sharar's historical works belong to this category.

During the Freedom Movement, Indian history was written with nationalist point of view, specially the Mughal period was selected by the Indian historians. Hindus and Muslims both, to show that throughout this period Hindus and Muslims lived together as one nation. The Mughal Emperors

Soviet annexation of Eastern Poland, and the Warsaw uprising. Romania sided with the Nazis and 100,000 Romanian soldiers fought along with Germans in the battle of Stalingrad, but this fact was concealed because of the Romanian friendship with USSR. Besides these, there are number of facts, which were either deleted, omitted, curtailed, or briefly mentioned without any comment.

The recent policy of perestroika and glasnost transfuses new blood into the discipline of history. The USSR now accepted the mistakes of concluding the pact of 1939, with Germany, of invading Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and sending her forces to Afghanistan. The whole era of Stalin is condemned and even the successors of Stalin are not spared. The self-criticism, admission of facts, and recognition of truth will encourage the historian to write the history objectively. It will provide them an access to the material which was till now beyond their reach. The historians are going to get rich and vast material to rewrite and revise the history, especially the history of World War II and the current history.

It is a matter of great courage for any nation to accept its past mistakes. It gives liberty to the historians to analyse the weaknesses and mistakes of the past regimes and help the policy-makers not to repeat them in future. People living in ignorance of their past cannot make progress in any field.

Therefore, we hope that in reviewing the past, discovering the mistakes, filling the gaps, correcting the falsehoods, analysing the working of the system, and revising their position in the world, the Russian and the East European historians would create a new confidence among the people and inspire them to work not only for their salvation but for the liberation of all oppressed nations.

HISTORY AND WAR

"A people living under the perpetual menace of war and invasion is very easy to govern. It demands no social reforms. It does not haggle over expenditures on armaments and military equipment. It pays without discussion it ruins itself; and that is an excellent thing for the syndicates of financiers and manufacturers for whom patriotic terrors are an abundant source of gain." *Anatole France* .

The Muslims of the Indian subcontinent inherited a warlike attitude from their ancestors, who came to India as conquerors, and after looting, plundering and devastating the country and the people, established the dynastic rule in India, which was continued upto the last Mughal Emperor in 1858.

Throughout their rule, the Muslim ruling classes remained busy in fighting against the Hindu rulers who constantly threatened their rule. Every rebellion and uprising was brutally crushed to teach a lesson to the opponents. The result was that war became the only solution to eliminate their rivals. Seldom it was tried to negotiate and settle the problems peacefully. Moreover, perpetual war was in the interest of the Muslim ruling classes to keep the army busy in fighting and acquiring more territory and war booty.

War has become a noble profession, and daily routine of life, so much so that arrow, bow, sword, and dagger were used in poetry describing the eyebrow of the beloved as bow and her looks as arrow or daggar. When the passions of love are expressed in the terminology of war, it indicates that the germs of war are deeply rooted in the society.

Our history is the history of wars and battles. The account of victory gives us unbound pleasure, while the defeat creates a desire to take revenge. The generals and commanders became our heroes and we measure their greatness with the number of people killed by them. Those who build the pillars of humar skulls are glorified. Thus, in the galaxy of our greatmen, we have only conquerors and army men. There is no place for scientists, men of letters and artists.

The result is that it is not our tradition to solve any problem by mutual discussion. We do not have any tolerance for our opponents and regard them as our arch-enemy. Every one who differs with our policy is dubbed as traitor and enemy of the country. There is no place for difference of opinion. Chauvinism is our characteristic. We wish to eliminate and wipe out all those who differ with us.

This tendency is fully expressed by the language of our rulers. Read any newspaper and you would find the headlines "to be crushed, to be finished or to be destroyed". Never there is a mood of reconciliation and never attempts are made to discuss and negotiate. To sit with opponents on a table is detestable. To listen to other's point of view is loathsome. War mongering has created intolerance, narrow-mindedness, prejudice and hatred.

The whole Pakistan movement is described in term of a war between the believers and unbelievers. This pushed us to fight three major wars against India. Every war, instead of settling the problems, nourished more germs of war. The historians of Pakistan failed to write a true account of these wars. They created more heroes and never pointed out the weaknesses. It was the general belief that in 1965 we won the war and this made us so confident that we were ready for another war in 1971.

In the 1971 war, instead of recognising our weaknesses, the state apparatus invented the theory of conspiracy and attributed our defeat to some external forces. This rescued the then ruling classes from all blames.

There is no doubt that it is in the interest of our ruling classes to keep the war mongering alive because it keeps them to motivate people to sacrific for the huge expenses of the army. People, under extensive propaganda prepare to accept poverty, hunger, and illiteracy rather than to see their defenders in need of modern weapons. History is ready to teach us what we really need, but the problem is that our ruling classes are only interested to learn what is in their interest. History teaches us that once the army and the people become isolated from each other, the country could not be defended by

the army alone. The difference between 1965 and 1971 wars is evident. After the independence of Bangladesh, our nation is further divided on linguistic and ethnic basis. There is need to unite the nation and not to create further division, to utilise the resources for the people and not to waste them in fighting a useless war.

History teaches us that war can never solve problems. Each war creates germs for a fresh war. The sentiments of nationalism which are created before and after a war always shortlived. Instead of mobilising people on war slogans, there is need to solve their basic economic and social problems which would create in them a sense of nationhood. Our society which is already divided, broken and shattered does not need war but peace for consolidation and stability.

TEACHING OF HISTORY IN PAKISTAN

The historians of newly-independent countries faced tremendous problems. They had not only to reconstruct their past, which was either ignored or distorted during the colonial rule, but also to analyse and understand the world history and civilisation from an independent point of view. These expectations, as far as we in Pakistan are concerned, have not been fulfilled.

Our historians failed to give an effective response to these challenges. Neither the history of the past has been objectively reshaped, nor is the history of the world and civilisation studied with the changing interpretations of time. Not a single history department in any of our universities has specialised in a particular field of history so as to give a lead and set up a school of historical ideas and philosophy.

The older historians, who inherited the burden of the colonial past, did not fully realise the importance of rewriting the history critically and training the younger generation of historians. They remained busy with university politics and gave less attention to academic pursuits.

The young generation of the historians chose such topics for the research as could get either Government grants or some foreign scholarships.

History, or any other subject for that matter, cannot be used to create consciousness and awakening unless it is pursued with conviction and commitment. Our historians, after independence, found themselves in a state of confusion. Lack of purpose and direction seriously affected our history writing. Disorder and unscientific approach are the main features of our historiography.

The result of the confusion is evident in the introduction of haphazard history courses in our educational institutions. Little or no change was made in the beginning and mostly the courses of the colonial period were retained. Later on, when it was decided that Pakistan had an ideology, courses in history were reshaped in order to stress that point of view. The result

was that all courses which seemed to interpret history contrary to the notions of ideology were deleted from our history books.

Thus, history of the world and civilisation cannot be studied and presented in a correct perspective. As a result, our history courses are confined to very limited areas. In Muslim History group, the history syllabus is very simple: the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the Pious Caliphs, the Ummayeds, and the Abasids. These course are repeatedly taught from school to university level and only one book "Tarikh-i-Islam", written by Dr. Hamid, is regarded sufficient to pass all examinations.

The students of Muslim history are not required to learn Arabic and study the original sources, nor are students of Medieval Indian History obliged to know Persian and study the subject with the help of primary sources.

The result is that our students remain ignorant of world history and civilisation, the development of different theories of history, and research methodology. The limited scope of history has rendered the subject uninteresting and dry.

Besides this, there are other problems which have created obstacles in the development of history teaching. No attempt is made to set up libraries containing important original and secondary sources on different periods and aspects of history. No central catalogue is available to guide us about books and manuscripts lying scattered in the libraries and private collections. Arrangements are not made either to get material from the BM (British Museum) and IOL (India Office Library). Even the material of great importance which is lying with Government departments, such as CID, judicial and revenue records, is not properly sorted and preserved.

In Sindh, the Chief Commissioner's record relating to the British period is kept in bundles and sacks waiting for experts to sift and properly catalogue it. No care is taken to preserve the current official records. It has been a practice of the top-notch bureaucrats to take away all important documents to write their autobiographies or history of their period for personal glorification and material gain. How will the future

historian write history in the absence of official documents and papers?

The change of medium of instruction from English to Urdu and Sindhi rapidly depressed the standard of education apart from creating and strengthening dual-class-oriented society. History, too, suffered from this change. In the absence of high-standard textbooks, the students rely on third-rate reading material just to pass the examinations.

These textbooks provide an unsystematic and faulty account of history which is reproduced by students in their assignments and examination papers. There are hardly any good and standard textbooks in Urdu and Sindhi on the European, American, Russian, or even Indian history. The available textbooks contain no recent research findings and usually they are without any interpretation.

For specialisation in any field of history, we depend on foreign universities. Even in the history of the Indian subcontinent, the English and American universities offer more opportunities than our own research institutions.

Lastly, study of history has suffered because of the socio-economic, and political problems of our society. Economic compulsions force every young man to study a subject which promises him a job opportunity at the earliest. Unfortunately history has no material value in the market. The truth is that our education has already collapsed and history has been buried, along with other branches of knowledge, under the rubble.

THE HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

For majority of the students, textbooks remain the only source of knowledge. After completing their education, they engage in professional activities and rarely get a chance to read other books to increase their knowledge and to know different interpretations.

Keeping in view importance of textbooks, the developing countries revise, rewrite and restructure textbooks again and again according to the change of time and the needs of the young generation. Moreover, the writing of textbooks is not monopolised by the government, but the publishers are allowed to publish their own textbooks. Competition compels the publishers to engage the competent writers and specialists to write textbooks. Thus, the variety of textbooks provides students different points of view to understand the subject thoroughly.

In Pakistan, the monopoly of the Textbooks Board to prepare and publish textbooks greatly damages the quality of the books. Mostly the books are written by incompetent writers who are not well versed in the subject. Ignorant of the changes, they repeat the old and obsolete theories.

As the writing of textbooks was controlled in the past by authoritarian governments and guardians of the ideology, carefully classified information was given to students to mould them in favour of an orthodox and reactionary system. The writing of history textbooks, was especially monitored and distorted version was propagated, leaving no option to the students to know any other point of view. The outcome of the manipulated history textbooks is a generation which is narrow-minded, prejudiced, and intolerant in outlook.

Realising the importance of history textbooks, Engels writes: "He who writes history textbooks, writes history". In Pakistan, we are following this precept and the result is that the material which is used for the writing of history textbooks is carefully selected and all those aspects which are not favorable or are against the vested interests of the ruling classes, are omitted.

Most of the history textbooks writers do not include new research findings and follow the antiquated pattern. In the beginning when our knowledge of history was limited, old historians reached certain conclusions which they derived from available material. Now the discovery of new material and new research has completely changed the outlook of history, but new interpretations and new research findings are not inculcated in the history textbooks which, consequently, reduce the importance of the subject.

For example, Akbar's religious policy and his Din-i-Elahi, in the light of new material, is analysed with a different point of view. As a young man Akbar was a staunch religious man, but tolerant towards the Hindus. He married a Rajput princess when he used to go barefoot to the tomb of Moinuddin Ajmeri. Modern research confirmed the view that the Mughal Emperor never mixed religion with politics. To them, political considerations are more important than the religious ones.

In our history textbooks, the term "Golden Age" is also used. It indicates the period of a certain king in which, it is believed everybody was happy. This is a wrong interpretation of the term. There might be golden periods for the nobility and the upper classes, but the common man always suffered in all ages. In the reign of Shah Jahan, the Taj, the Red Fort and other splendid buildings were built, but in the same age there were famines and droughts and thousands of people died in starvation. For the ruling classes it could be a golden period, but not for the common people.

It is customary for the textbooks writers to give their judgement on the good or bad character of the historical personalities. The result is that the student, instead of analysing personalities according to his own views, judges them in the light of the textbooks. The judgement paralyses an analytical approach of the students and discourages them from forming their own opinion.

Mostly, history textbooks describe political history and rarely mention the social and cultural aspects. By emphasising the role of the individual, the writers create more heroes than a small nation requires. Some of them are so unknown that it is

difficult to find their achievements. Although no attempt is made to maintain economic parity among the four provinces, but at least the history textbooks are successful in finding equal number of heroes in the four provinces.

For writers of history textbooks, it is imperative to study primary sources as well as modern research works and then write textbooks comprising the old and the new points of view. The textbooks should also be revised from time to time and new material should be included to make them relevant to the requirements of the modern age. Only then will these textbooks be able to dispel deep-rooted prejudices and broaden our perspective of history.

WRITING OF HISTORY IN PAKISTAN

With the passage of time, a growing historical consciousness stimulates all societies and communities. The increasing record of history has broadened our mental horizon. History no longer remains confined to politics but includes in its domain, medicine, sport, transport, industry, art, literature, agriculture, science and technology and their impact on society. This broader perspective has transformed history from a chronicle of past politics into a multi-dimensional discipline. It is no more a chronicle of kings, but a record of the activities of the masses.

Historically conscious societies are challenging all traditions and values of the past as preserved in history. Their continuous effort is to defrost the past and rewrite it according to current requirements. In this process most of the heroes of the past lose their pedestals. The iconoclast historian smashes one by one the once-magnificent idols and puts them at the feet of the people. Similarly, the traditions of the past which were much venerated and worshiped are nor attacked and proved obsolete, of no use to the new generations. History is thus used as an effective instrument to enlighten the mind and the soul, to dig into the past, to search for truth, and to dismantle superstitions and banish ignorance.

We as a people lack historical consciousness. We do not use history to educate people, but to enslave them. History is not used to discard ancient prejudices but to preserve them. It is not used to smash the false idols but to create fraudulent ones. Our society wishes to keep the misinterpreted past intact. Though the knowledge of the past is progressive and not static, no attempt is being made to judge it with the change of time. This makes our past putrid. It is judged and assessed with the same old and rusty values. It appears that we desire no change, want no progress.

History has become the handmaiden of politics and is used to justify all our political, economic and social misdeeds. Once autocratic institutions are set up, all such aspects of history which deal with democracy, liberalism, socialism, and secularism are excluded. The official historians offer their

services to write history in order to provide the arguments in support of decadent institutions.

Through history, the theory of usurpation of power is legitimised. All progressive idea and concepts become alien to us. The principle of historical change is denied and the idea of universal and everlasting values is vehemently propagated. Relevant history which could enlighten our young generation is expunged from the textbooks. For example, the history of the evolution of mankind is regarded as contrary to our beliefs, ancient Indian history is condemned as unholy. In this context, the recent trend to disown the Indus valley civilisation and the Gandhara culture is worth consideration. What remains is the Muslim history as interpreted by sectarian scholars. It is repeatedly and dryly taught from school to university and succeeds only in limiting our knowledge of the past and circumscribing our vision of the future.

Motivated religion is another factor which has left a baneful effect on our history. Most of our historiography originates in religion. Devotion to our faith blinds us to truth and facts in our assessment of personalities and events of the past. This attitude completely blocks any constructive criticism and genuine analysis. Similarly, national and racial approaches in constructing and interpreting history have damaged the historical truth and promoted its falsification.

Our historians fail to understand that history has its own course, process and flow, and requires that the past be judged according to historical dilecticism. Subjective, religious, national, and racial approaches snatch the events and personalities away from the main flow and separate them from their roots and colour them according to our likes and dislikes. Even in recording the history of religion, the biased approach of various sects distorts facts of religious significance.

One of the poisonous elements in our hisotriography is the communal hatred which we inherited from the pre-independence period. During the freedom struggle, the communal atmosphere pressurised the Muslim historians to create communal heroes as symbols of unity. Thus Muhammad Bin Qasim, Mahmood of Ghazna, and Aurangzeb became the

idols of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. After independence, Pakistani historians carried on in the same communal traditions with great intensity. So much so that even the name "India" became taboo and, instead, of it, 'South Asia' is widely used. There are systematic efforts by ideological historians to break all our cultural relations with the Indian past and link them to the Middle East.

The tragedy is that history has lost all charm and attraction in our society because our historians have failed to bring it down from the chronicles of kings to the activities of the masses. On the contrary, history is used to glorify the ruling classes, who are as eager as the kings and aristocracy in the past, to have a place in history and in order to find a better place distort the facts in their favour. History has become a tool to praise the powerful at the expense of the masses. The result is that the lower classes neither have any historical consciousness nor any interest in the subject as it does not reflect their hopes and fears. How can they take interest in a history which gives them nothing but shame and disgrace?

Lack of historical consciousness creates an apathy in our social institutions which do not take any interest in preserving their records, documents, and archives. For anyone wanting to write history of the police, the judiciary, the army, industry, agriculture, etc, it is well-nigh impossible to get the requisite material. These institutions have lost all interest in preserving their records for posterity, because they believe they do not have anything of importance to preserve.

There is nothing in their cupboards for the future except corruption, intrigue, dishonesty, greed, and nepotism. Therefore, their interest is not to preserve but to destroy all evidences of their crimes and misdeeds. Our top bureaucrats, after a change of regime, take all government records, documents and official papers as booty either to destroy them, leaving no trace of their heinous crimes, or to use them for defending their past conduct.

History could be used to reawaken the people from slumber and lethargy only if it was objectively and correctly recorded. To create mass interest in history, it should be

broad-based and all cultural social, and political aspects of our life should be dealt with and chronicled. To achieve this, history has to be liberated from religious national, racial, political, and communal prejudices. Only then could it emancipate the people from ignorance and superstition. This should be the sole aim of all enlightened historians.

PROBLEMS OF RESEARCH IN PAKISTAN

Research in social and natural sciences plays an important role in the creation of a spirit of investigation and criticism. A society cannot survive without free and independent research-free from religious, political, social, and economic pressures. A research scholar should be given full freedom to present his point of view. Criticism, discussions, and exchange of views not only create tolerance but broaden the vision also. But research activities can only be useful as long as these are relevant to the problems of a society. A research which is not related to socio-economic problems remains ineffective and unnoticed.

The research activities in our country are greatly hampered because of the political changes. It is the usual practice that every government which comes in power, persuades the scholars to select such topics of research which support its policies and strengthen its base of power. As majority of the scholars work either in government institutions or government-funded bodies, they pursue government policies and act not as independent scholars but as bureaucrats and government spokesmen.

I have some knowledge about the research done in the discipline of history in the universities and government institutions. It is out of question to have an independent point of view and to challenge the existing interpretation of official history. From the very beginning our bureaucrats regard history as a very sensitive subject and see that no scholar differs with the government point of view. I remember that once in a conference a complaint was made to the Director general of the Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad, about the publication of a book criticising Shah Waliullah of Delhi. The Director general, instead of defending the freedom of expression and research, apologised and promised to withhold the copies of the book from further circulation. He also assured the audience that such mistakes would not be repeated in future. He kept his promise and the institute did not publish any outstanding work either in the filed of history or culture.

I also remember my case when in one of my interviews I said that Muhammad bin Qasim was an aggressor and invaded Sindh unprovoked. Some teachers of my university approached the Vice-Chancellor and demanded the immediate termination of my job. Throughout my service tenure, I feared losing my job on this pretext. The sword of Damocles hung on my head, reminding me not to be too bold.

It is clear that independent research cannot be done unless we have our own private institutes, free from government control. To have such institutes is difficult because of the lack of finances. There ar plenty of rich people, who are ready to contribute to any religious institutions, but there is no one who can pay even a paltry amount for a secular and democratic cause. It means that those who have means to support are not convinced to promote secular and democratic traditions. Because of financial problems, there are part time research scholars, who work full time somewhere else and devote their free time to research activities.

The only field where some research has been done is the Pakistan Movement. Even in this field, emphasis is laid on the Two Nation Theory. All other factors, including socio-economic, are completely ignored. This type of research neither provides a new interpretation nor challenges old concepts and theories.

Moreover, it is a practice to write a thesis or book on the same topic again and again without investigating and using new material. For example, on the contribution of Sindh to the Pakistan Movement, six or eight books have been published and each of them contains the same material and the same findings. Another favourite topic in Sindh is the separation of Sindh from the Bombay presidency. Again the scholars use the same material and present only the Muslim point of view.

The interesting feature is that, on the one hand, scholars of Sindh, Baluchistan, and Frontier provinces are highlighting the contribution of their provinces to the Pakistan Movement, while, on the other, anti-Pakistan tendencies are growing rapidly. I have personal experience that such works have no impact on the young generation of Sindh. People are not

interested in Sindh's contribution to the Pakistan Movement but what happened to Sindh and other small provinces after the partition. At prese . people are concerned to know the cause of the ethnic and linguistic problems and not to know a story of the past which is dull and uninteresting. The unpopularity of these books clearly indicates that this type of research is not relevant to our society.

In our universities, topics for Ph.Ds and M. Phils are assigned after careful scrutiny by the University Board of Advanced Study. Topics, which the Board regards against the interest of the existing government and its external and internal policies, are rejected. When I was professor in Sindh University, it happened many times that the topics which I recommended for research, were vetoed by the Board without giving any reason.

During Zia-ul-Haq's time, when his government's relations with Palestinians were not cordial, a student approached me for work on the PLO. I recommended the topic which was promptly rejected by the Board.

In Pakistan, the future of research looks very bleak. Stimulating and refreshing research cannot flourish unless the whole system is changed. Again, the question to be studied is: Is this research in social and natural sciences which changes the system or does a system promote objective research activities? or are both inter-related?

OUR TRIBAL SOCIETY AND THE HISTORY-WRITING

To write the history of the NWFP and Balochistan is a difficult task for the historians because these were the areas where the state and its institutions were either non-existent or not fully developed. The result was that no historiography of these areas was written.

As the tribes of these areas fought against the central government, the official historians at the court looked at these tribes as rebels and called these areas as turbulent. This negative approach of history downgraded the status and position of the tribes. The official historians failed to appreciate their tribal values, their fight for independence, and their boldness and courage in daily life.

The British inherited the same policy towards these tribes and regarded them untrustworthy and unfriendly. The constant conflict between the colonial power and the tribes, on the one hand, forced the colonialists to respect them. On the other it caused irritation and despair.

However, credit goes to the colonial power that it did not leave the problem of the tribes unsolved, but made attempts to study their history, culture, values, habits, and languages; and equipped with this knowledge, they successfully negotiated with them, made friendly relations with them, fought and made peace with them.

There were a number of European travellers, historians archaeologists, anthropologists, socialogists, and linguists who traversed the most inaccessable routes and collected material about those people who were forgotten or neglected.

These scholars learnt these languages which were not known by the world; they not only learnt but preserved them after inventing the scripts. They collected their folklore, stories, and sifted the history from myths. They studied their culture and traced its roots. The result of their efforts was that the world came to know about these tribes and their culture which was not known before. The discovery of their history

and culture brought these tribes to light and enriched the history of the world civilisation.

Once they got a dignified place in history, their image changed. They were not looked upon as barbarians but as human beings. Their traditions and values were not despised but respected. Their conflict with the center was no more regarded as rebellion and insurgency, but wars for freedom and independence. Their courage, bravery, generosity and hospitality were appreciated and eulogised.

The British left valuable record in the shape of gazetteers, reports, state documents, letters, autobiorgraphies, diaries, travelogues, and historical writings regarding these tribes, making the task of modern historians easy in writing a systematic history of these areas.

After independence, we heavily relied on the records which the British had left. The writings of Pottinger, Raverty, Mason, Alexander Burnes and a host of other scholars, supply the most valuable information about these tribes. The history of the Pathan by Olaf Croe is still the most authentic history which is not replaced by any local historian.

The tragedy is that instead of knowing the history and culture of these tribes, our ignorance is increasing day by day and we are relying more and more on the foreign scholar to make research for our own people.

We feel happy that foreigners, after tedious labour, make us great in history. This attitude makes us lethargic to research and write our own history. This is the reason why we lack historical consciousness. To get a dignified place in history, we need to write our own history.

HISTORY - WRITING AS A 'CORRECTIVE'

Modern historiography in the Muslim world came into being as a result of European colonisation because, after the colonisation, these powers distorted the historical past in order to alienate the people from their own history and prevent any growth of historical consciousness.

The challenge to regain the past was responded to with the emergence of western educated intellectuals who made attempts to use history to fight against the colonial powers and to counter the charges levelled against them.

Therefore, the new historical interpretations were the product of the challenges of colonisation, and the result was in reaction, they became sometimes too chauvinistic in glorifying the past, distorting facts, and condemning everything which was western or written by western orientalists.

The basis which constituted modern Muslim historiography was to prove Muslim civilisation as superior to the European. It is argued that the Middle Ages of Europe, in comparison to the Muslim civilisation, were dark and backward.

When Muslim civilisation was at its height, the Christian countries were in their most despicable period of history. The Muslim civilisation brilliantly contributed to art, literature, and science and, as a matter of fact, taught Europe its first lessons in civilisation. It was their translation of Greek literature which preserved it from perishing.

The early geographical exploration of the Europeans became possible only because of the Muslim seafarers whose experience and guidance helped them to explore the new sea-routes. For example, Vasco de Gama was guided by an Arab to discover the Cape of Good Hape. The same is true of Columbus.

Cyprus and Andalusia were the centers of the Muslim culture and civilisation from where the Europeans learned and imitated knowledge.

The Muslims were tolerant towards other religious minorities, especially the Jews, who enjoyed full freedom at the courts of the Muslim rulers. Therefore, antisemitism was the product of the Christian society and not of the Muslims.

As most of the Muslim countries suffered under European imperialism, the Muslim historians traced back the hostility of the Europeans from the time of the Crusades and it is argued that colonisation was the result of their failure in Crusades against the Muslims.

The establishment of Israel in their midst is the same as the consolidation of the Latin states in Syria during the Crusade period. It is ungrateful on the part of the Christians and Jews who behaved badly for the good conduct of the Muslims in the past.

Later on, some myths helped Muslim historians to assert the Islamic contribution in the development of the European civilisation. For example, the myth of the grandeur of Muslim Spain was created in the 19th century. In 1840-1886, the works of the 17th century historian Al-Maggari were published in England.

The publication discovered the contribution of Muslim Spain towards science and literature. It thrilled the Muslim world and Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the Ottoman Sultan, immediately sent Ottoman scholars to Spain in search of Arabic manuscripts. Since then it became the favourite topic of the Muslim historians to highlight and project Muslim Spain's contribution towards the European civilisation.

Similarly, Gibbon's opinion that the defeat of the Muslims in the South of France prevented Islam from becoming the religion of Europe, is mourned by modern Muslim's historian who accused the selfishness of the Muslim generals who lost a golden chance to conquer and convert Europe.

Such history writings superficially create a sense of pride but do not help to provide an insight into understanding the process of history. Moreover, such writings conceal their own

weaknesses and prevent the people from learning lesson from history.

THE ISLAMISATION OF HISTORY

The modern Islamic historiography is formulated by western orientalists; therefore, the historical terms, the classification, and the periodisation are organised according to their concepts.

In the beginning, they used the term Mohammadan for the Muslims and called it Mohammadan history. Later on, some western educated Muslims criticised the term on the ground that they were not the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the Christians are, therefore, they abandoned it and called it the "Muslim or Islamic history."

Again, when Muslim history revealed the inconsistencies between the practice and theory of Islam, some of the Muslim intellectuals tried to differentiate between "Islamic and Muslim history". According to them, Islamic history ended after the four orthodox Caliphs and then began Muslim history, a history which bears no relation to Islamic teachings.

However, the term Islamic or Muslim is a modern one used by western orientalists to study the history and culture of the Muslims, while Muslim historians, before the European colonisation, never called it Muslim or Islamic but indentified it with the ruling dynasties, such as the Umayyads and the Abbasids.

Islamic or Muslim history, according to the orientalists begins from the advent of Islam and ends on the Abbasid Caliphate. Thereafter begins the history of the regional dynasties. The history of Egypt and Northern Africa is called the history of the Maghreb, which includes the Fatimids and the Almovahids and the Almoravids.

The Muslim rule in Spain became "The Moorish period". It followed the history of the Ottomans of Turkey, the Safavids of Iran, and the Mughals of India. Thus, the term Islamic history is used for the history of the Arabs and related only to the Middle East.

As a result of European colonisation when the movement of Arab nationalism emerged, the Arab intellectual made attempts to nationalise their history on the secular basis and liberate it from religion. Arab nationalism incorporated Christians and the Arab Muslims into one, whereas non-Arabs were merely co-believers..

One of the Arab intellectuals, Sati al-Husri writes: "Religion is a matter between the individual and God while the fatherland is common to all". Under the influence of Arab nationalism, Islamic history was Arabised, especially the Christian Arabs took active part in writing history on the basis of nationalism - secularism. One example is Philip K. Hitti's book the *History of the Arabs*. The weakness of Pan-Arabism and the emergence of the nation-state again changed the outlook of history. Some of the Arab countries, by adopting the secular approach, glorified the period before Islam. Some of the states, such as Iraq, used the past glory for projecting dictatorship and strengthening Saddam Hussein's rule.

In some countries, such as Egypt, local nationalism is influenced by religion and history is written with this approach. It condemns the Egyptian past, the Pharonic period and praises the Islamic period of its history.

In most of the Muslim countries, history-writing is under the influence of religion and only a few historians are trying to secularise it and broaden its scope. The greatest weakness of this historiography is that it lacks the elements of self-criticism and, without it, history remains only for entertainment.

When Dr. Taha Hussain published his book on the Peots of the Jahilliyah, there was such a hue and cry against the book that the author expunged those parts in the second edition which were objectionable to the ulema. As a result of these checks, Muslim historians failed to produce first-rate research work and, in the absence of new interpretation and new approach of history, the scholars rely more and more on the history written by western orientalists.

2

INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

HOW TO WRITE HISTORY UNDER DICTATORSHIP

As the basis of a dictator's power is not on popular consent but coercion and violence, attempts are made to conceal all such facts which threaten his rule. His main concern is not to reveal any weakness of his regime and to hide all his mistakes to keep the people in the dark in order not to encourage any opposition.

The discipline of history is used to justify the legitimacy of the regime and to misinform and brainwash the people. The subject specially faces immense problems in those countries where the dictators replace each other within a short span of time. While in power, these dictators commission the rewriting of history according to their policies. After their death or removal from power, the new regime changes the whole version of history and commands the historians to reconstruct the past with new interpretation and if necessary, condemn the removed dictator.

The historians are allowed to unearth facts about the misdeeds of the past dictator. Every time, under the instructions of the dictator, the textbooks of history are revised

and readjusted for the requirements of the new man. When in power, the dictator is called a liberator and a great leader, but after the change of government, the same person becomes oppressor, tyrant, and bloodthirsty.

In these countries where dictatorship stays for a longer period, the discipline of history loses all its charm and vigour. Only one version of history is repeatedly taught in the educational institutions, giving no chance to new research and a fresh point of view. History is distorted up to an extent that facts are either changed or manipulated. Attempts are made to leave no evidence of his misdeeds and mistakes.

George Orwell rightly points out: "All history is a palimpsest scraped clean and reinscribed, exactly as often as is necessary. The past is written in the li·ht of the present requirements of the authoritarian government."

History no longer remains objective under dictatorship and is interpreted according to his personal whims. Historians are specially watched and not allowed to write anything contrary to the ideas of the dictator. Nikita Khrushchev warns: "Historians are dangerous and capable of turning everything topsy-turvey. They have to be watched."

Under totalitarian governments, research institutes are set up to train official historians who prepare the textbooks and carefully scrutinise the material deciding how much history is needed for the students and the people. In these institutes, research is conducted on topics that justify the government policies. Even the history of the neighbouring countries is interpreted according to its relations with the regime. Modern and current history is more ruthlessly tampered in view of the interests of the dictator.

There are different methods to tamper with history, one of them, according to George Orwell, is to omit those facts which are not platable to the dictator: "The most powerful form of lie is the omission, and it is the duty of the historian to make sure that these lies do not creep into the history books."

Official historians select only those aspects that suit the dictator and cleverly omit those which they regard injurious to his government. Sometime the facts are written with such brevity that nothing can be understood. The best example is the separation of Bangladesh in our own history which is not treated in detail, nor the facts are exhaustively examined. The result is that the people failed to understand the extent of the tragedy and forgot it soon.

The despotic government creates such a mess and leaves the discipline of history in such a miserable condition that when a time comes to reconstruct it in a free and democratic government, it becomes an Herculean task to collect the missing material because all the sources such as state documents, records, newspapers, magazines, journals, and reports contain nothing but the official version. To glean the truth from these sources is almost impossible. In the process of censorship, the material is either curtailed or destroyed leaving gaps in the sequence of events.

Under totalitarian governments, courses of history are designed with the object to establish a popular image of the dictator. Therefore, the whole history is interpreted in terms of the role of the individual in history.

This interpretation convinces the people to rely on a powerful man for guidance, because a great leader has energy, capacity and sagacity to deliver them from all crises. Once the people believe it, it makes them docile and obedient. They always look for a liberator and messiah to rescue them. It makes the dictator a superman and a hero. Sometimes he is compared to the great leaders of the past and projected as the only leader to accomplish their unfinished mission.

A conscious effort is made not to write the history of a revolution. If a revolution is discussed at all, it is painted all black, i.e, an attempt to overthrow a legal government and create confusion and anarchy after dismantling the established institutions and traditions. Similarly, democracy, secularism, liberalism, and enlightenment are condemned, especially in the Islamic countries, as a conspiracy of the West to undermine

The case of "Black hole" is famous in the history of British India. The tale of the unfortunate women, children, and men were circulated among the company's army in order to take revenge for this heinous crime. Although later research proved that the whole story was fabricated, but it served the political purpose to provide a moral justification to fight against Sirajuddoula.

Why did the aggressor need moral justification for his aggression? One of the reasons is that through moral justification he made the war either national or religious, and concealed his own private motives or the vested interest of the ruling classes. The second important reason was that a war without a cause did not mobilise the soliders and create support among the people.

The soldiers should be exploited either in the name of religion, nationalism, or patriotism. It is interesting to note that in these cases usually women were more exploited. The stories of dishonoring women were enough to mobilise the people. Again the case of the Arab invasion of Sindh is a typical example. The widely circulated story about the plight of the women and children not only provided a large number of recruits to the army but pressurised the Caliph to give his sanction to the campaign.

The moral justification made the soldiers ready to fight against the enemy. To them the conflict became just and after the conquest plundering and war cruelties were justified. In fact the invasions were always carried out for the benefit of the ruling classes and not in the interest of the common man. To cover their personal and class interests, some pretext to appeal to the common people was invested. This made the war either holy or just.

The soldiers fought with conviction and sacrificed their lives but all benefits were usurped by the ruling classes.

In case of war or aggression, the ruling classes pretended to protect their subjects. This happened only when their own interest coincide with that of the populace otherwise they never took any action for the sake of a few women and children. The

action was always taken when it was profitable. Never was a war fought to save the life of a poor woman or child. When there was no financial benefit, every insult was tolerated. This attitude is clearly indicated by an incident of British India. The East India Company sent a mission in 1799-1800 to Sindh to open a factory at Thatta and Karachi. The mission was opposed by the Hindu traders of Karachi and demanded the Mirs not to grant permission to open the factories. The Mirs, under their pressure, ordered the mission to leave Sindh immediately. That was the time when the Company was at the height of its power, but the insult was devoured because it was not the proper time to conquer Sindh. When the opportunity came, Sindh was occupied without any provocation.

The tendency to find out some moral justification for an aggression is continued up to modern times. The US government invaded Libya, as she assumed that country was involved in some acts of sabotage against the American citizens. The same is the case of the invasion of Panama, whose President Noreiga was once a favorite of CIA, but when he lost his usefulness to the US, his connection with drugs were exploited and all of a sudden it became the moral duty of the US to remove him from power.

It is the task of the historians not to give emphasis on the immediate causes which were made for moral justification, but to find out the real motives of the aggressors. This would expose the moral bankruptcy and the propaganda of their morality and justice.

COLONISATION AND THE LANGUAGE

The impact of colonisation is manifold and ranges from military defeat to the suppression of cultural identity. Whereas results of defeat in the battlefield are shortlived and can be cured, what happens to cultural life, cannot be easily assessed.

The first step of colonisation is military defeat which renders a nation incapable to resist the colonial power, accelerating the process of recognising it as supreme. Military defeat is followed by attacks on social and cultural institutions and traditions in an attempt to make them worthless.

Once the colonised people abandon these institutions and traditions, they do not have any other alternative than the adoption of the colonial ones. The change from indigenous to foreign culture saps their energies to create anything orginal. In this process, a class of collaborators emerges, who imitates the foreign ruling classes by cutting off their roots from their own culture and dividing the society into two distinct groups; the elite and the common folk.

Adoption of foreign language creates a barrier between the elite and the people. Once the colonial power declares its language as official, it is eagerly learnt by those who are interested in getting government jobs. They abandon their own language and concentrate on learning the language of the colonial masters.

The people of India greatly suffered from time to time as a result of colonisation. The patronage of the colonial language prevented the growth of their local languages and made their intellectual life barren and sterile.

When the Muslims came to India and the Muslim dynasties established their rule, the language of the majority of the Muslim elite was Persian, which became the court language and soon, under official patronage, asserted its supremacy over the local languages. The majority of the Indian population remained unfamiliar to Persian except for a few groups of collaborators who learned Persian in order to get royal favors.

The language, thus, separated the ruling classes and the people from each other.

Because of the language, most of the talented Indians could not get government jobs, and because of lack of official patronage, they could not contribute in any worthwhile way to their own languages. Only those people whose mother tongue was Persian monopolised all lucrative jobs and possessed high ranks.

There emerged a group of Indians known as Kayasth who learned Persia and, after a severe competition, were employed in government service. Throughout history, they were ridiculed by the Indian-Muslims and their competency of the language was challenged. It was in the interest of the Muslim ruling classes not to give any chance to the Indians to learn Persian and compete with them.

The irony was that, on the one hand, the Muslim nobility refused to recognise the language of the Kayasth as standard, while, on the other, the Iranians never regarded the Indian Muslims' language as pure and polished. Although the Indian Muslim intellectuals tried to get recognition from Persia, they were always looked down upon. Such a great poet as Amir Khusru was called by the Iranian "Parrot of India," because parrots, are famous for mimicry.

Majority of the Indian poets and men of letters tried to imitate the Iranians, and therefore, instead of creating something original, they regurgitated what the Iranians had already produced. The result was that the literature which was produced, was Iranian in character having no relationship with Indian traditions and culture.

Thus the Persian language, on the one hand, divided the rulers and the ruled, and, on the other, it encouraged imitation rather than creation. Intellectually, the Indian Muslims remained under the cultural imperialism of Iran and failed to produce their own cultural traditions.

The same process followed when the British after establishing their political power, made English the official

language. A group of Indians soon learned it to get political advantages. Again, the language created a barrier between the ruling elite and the people. The English-speaking Indian group cut off its roots from the local culture and joined the British ruling classes as their middle-men. In spite of their proficiency in the language, their English accent was ridiculed by the British and referred to as "Pidgin English." Deprived from their cultural roots again, the Indian intellectuals failed to produce anything orginal. After independence, the English-speaking class in Pakistan regards itself as the heirs of the British and looks down on everything which is indigenous. The difference of language is still keeping the barrier between the elite and the common people intact. Unless this barrier is removed, the process of nation-building in Pakistan cannot be started.

EDUCATION AND THE ELITE

In India, during the rule of the Muslim dynasties, the nobility did not send their children to school. The schools were only for the poor and the lower classes. The nobility abhorred the mixing of their children with the lower castes and classes. Therefore, they employed the best teachers of different subjects to teach their children at home. The emperor's children were more privileged and sometimes a separate school was set up at the palace where the sons of some high ranking nobles were also allowed to study along with the princes.

The concept of separate education for the sons of nobility was deeply rooted in the class structure of the society where it was a matter of prestige to keep the distance from the inferior classes. The social relationship between two unequals was unthinkable. Best education for the nobility was a commodity that could be purchased at high price. The result of the system was that the teacher lost his social status in the society because he became a servant of the nobility who treated him contemptuously like other servants. He had respect not because of his knowledge and learning. Social status was determined by wealth and power.

The system of education was further divided according to the needs of the nobility and lower classes. The nobles wanted to train their sons as warriors and administrators, therefore, the teachers were employed to instruct them in the art of warfare and administration. There was no need to teach them science or philosophy. On the other hand, in the *madrisas* and *pathshalas*, the students were instructed mainly on different aspects of religion. There were no secular sciences. If somebody wanted to become an architect or painter, he had to work as an apprentice with some *ustad* (teacher) and learn from him. Thus, education was divided between the rulers and the ruled. There are some subjects which were reserved only for the nobility and the common people could not afford to pay the price.

The modern school system was introduced by the British. As the landed aristocracy was the backbone of their system,

they persuaded them to send their children to the school instead of teaching them at home. It was difficult in the beginning as the nobility did not want to break a tradition which they regarded as a privilege. In the school, the teachers were for all students, while at their palaces they were only for their children. Moreover, it was repugnant to them that all the boys irrespective of their status should sit on the same benches.

However, it was the policy of the British government to keep this class intact. Therefore, they were urged to study modern knowledge and fortify their position in the society. To maintain their status, they were allowed to bring a number of servants to look after their needs. No corporal punishment was allowed as it was considered a great insult by the aristocracy. In case of the residential school, there was no common mess and each boy was allowed to have his own cook and kitchen. Later on, Colonel Walter, the British resident of Bharatpur, suggested the idea to establish a school for the princes of Rajputana's chiefs. His idea was to transform them as "English gentlemen, not mere bookworms, but men fond of field sports and outdoor exercises. . . Can we hope to see the Native Princes of India occupying the position they ought to hold as the promoters of peace, prosperity and progress among their own people, and the hearty supporters of British authority and power ? The government set up schools exclusively for the aristocracy where the commoners were not admitted. However, the image of these students was "fashionable gentleman only, playing hockey, smoking cigars, riding bikes, and aping European customs and manners."

The efforts of the British to train the elite class to share power with them failed miserably because the princes and zamindars could not educate themselves up to the standard to handle the complicated affairs of the administration. The result was that the middle class educated Indians, by expelling the elite class from national leadership, took hold of all nationalist movements, and instead of collaboration, demanded independence from foreign rule.

THE ART OF FEUDAL POLITICS

Analysing the role of the Indian landed aristocracy in 1857, one of the British officers reported in 1860s that it was common during the Mughal rule to have one son converted to Islam in order to get the support of the court: Similar caution prevails at a more modern date by sending one relative to the British force, and another to the rebels, to make sure safety whichever side might win.

The landed aristocracy throughout Indian history preserved its privileges by joining both sides in case of crisis and never committing to stick for a cause. They joined political party or movement not out of conviction but by weighing the advantages to their family and class. Whenever there were two equal powers competing for political power, the members of the same family joined both and thus never lost their privileges and status.

After establishing British power in India, when all the opposition was completely wiped out, the landed aristocracy wholeheartedly supported their government and never complained or opposed its policies. After the foundation of the Congress, they remained aloof from politics and watched the outcome of opposition politics.

Later on, the younger generation of the feudal class started to support the political parties. Throughout the freedom movement, the members of the same family on one side were government officers and on the other, members of political parties, thus skilfully balancing their position. The result is that, especially in Pakistan, the social structure has remained intact and the landed aristocracy has earned respect by propagating that it contributed morally and materially to the freedom movement.

After the partition, as long as Muslim League kept hold of power, all the feudals remained in the League, but as soon as the League's hold was weakened and other political parties started to emerge and challenge the political domination of the League, the feudal class adopted the same policy. It joined the different political groups in order to safeguard their interests.

In Pakistan, the landed aristocracy has very tactfully infiltrated its members in the army, bureaucracy, and political parties. Therefore, for the feudals, it is no problem which party rules or what type of government comes to power. They enjoy their privileges whether there is martial law or democracy. They maintain their position in all political upheavals.

No government dares to change the social and economic structure. Even the government with the slogan of socialism failed to introduce any reforms against the feudals. They remained safe and secure in their rural *havelis* and mud fortresses along with their armed thugs to terrorise the peasantry. The administration is under their tutelage to coerce the people. Their brutal rule continues because every political party needs them to win elections.

The result is that nearly all political parties are dominated by the feudals. As they do not have any political commitment, it is easy for them to become socialist, secular, or religious. There is also no problem to change sides at any time. It is not surprising that the same person at one time is a staunch socialist and after a few months he suddenly becomes a religious revivalist. Political opportunism is the characteristic of this class and they successfully exploit it for their interests.

Because of the domination of the feudals, political parties have no definite manifesto and depend on the feudals to win elections. Even the Muslim League before partition gave tickets to those feudals who had the potentials to win elections. It is thus, not the party but the feudals who win elections.

Usually, it is argued that in the election of 1988, after the defeat of the big and influential landlords in Sindh, feudalism is weakened. It is not so, as those candidates who won the election are also feudals. PPP did not take the risk to give tickets to a common party worker and allow him to contest against the feudals and win. Therefore, as long as the feudals class dominates the political parties, there is no hope for any change. Therefore, as far as the people are concerned to them Martial law and democracy are two faces of the same coin.

How the landlord politicians are rehabilitated and their crimes and follies are concealed, is indicated by the speech of G.M. Syed which he delivered in 1969 from the platform of the Sindh Mutaheda Mahaz in connection with One Unit. He tried to mend the reputation of Ayub Khuhro who was responsible for One Unit, but later on joined Anti-One Unit Movement because of his vested interests, G.M. Syed eulogised for the role which he played in the separatist movement of Sindh from Bombay Presidency; and his opposition to separating Karachi from Sindh and making it federal capital. According to G.M. Syed, he helped the One Unit scheme not knowing its effects on Sindh, but as soon as he realised it, he corrected his mistake by joining the Anti-One Unit Movement. This liberated him from all his political crimes. Again, he assumed the character of a patriot who suffered because of the people.

Similarly, he cited the example of Z.A. Bhutto who, after his return from the West, joined the Anti-One Unit Movement, but soon resigned because he was offered a ministry by Ayub Khan. He faithfully served the dictator and opposed Fatima Jinnah in the elections. As soon as he confronted Ayub Khan after the 1965 war, his previous role was forgotten and G.M. Syed paid a tribute to him that, though a rich person, he had endured the suffering of imprisonment because of his commitment to the country.

Pir Ali Rashid, famous for his opportunism in politics, was the person who requested Ayub Khan to declare himself king, and later on he confirmed it and asserted that it was the best solution for Pakistan's problems. G.M. Syed praised him for writing a series of articles against the dictatorship of Ayub Khan, `a commendable job that cannot be forgotten'

In political ups and downs, change of loyalties of the feduals are in the end pardoned and they emerge as patriots and leaders of the downtroddon people. This hapens only because there is nobody to challenge this interpretation of history.

THE MAJORITY - MINORITY CONFLICT

There are a number of contemporary conflicts in Pakistani society. Some of them are deeply rooted in our past and some of them are a result of present problems. In this paper, I shall briefly discuss the conflict between the minority and the majority and, its effect on the formulation of our social, political, and the intellectual outlook.

The Muslim ruled India in the capacity of a military minority and subdued the Hindu majority with coercion. The minority rule over the majority popularised the concept that one Muslim is equal to ten Hindus. The superiority of the Muslim minority decreased as a result of the Mughal decline and the rise of the nationalist forces of the Marhattas, the Jats, and the Sikhs.

It was unacceptable for the Muslims to recognize the over lordship of the Hindus who remained under their control. First, Ahmad Shah Abadali was invited to rescue them from the Marhatta onslaught. When he failed to rescue them, they looked around for some other help. Luckily, at this stage, the British emerged as a conquering force and the Muslim minority preferred their rule over the Marhattas or the Sikhs. In this sense, British rule was God's blessing to the Muslim minority, which saved them from the humiliation of the Hindu majority domination.

Once British rule was established on a permanent basis, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his followers persuaded the Muslims to be loyal to them as their rule was a guarantee against the Hindu majority. The outcome of this attitude was that the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent heavily relied on foreign help to solve their problems rather than to face the challenge themselves.

The movement of the Hindus against the British greatly alarmed the Muslims. Their first reaction was to keep the British rule intact in India, but when it appeared that their departure was imminent, they demanded the partition of India instead of agreeing to live in a secular and democratic country.

The partition and the independence, instead of solving the minority-majority conflicts, gave it a new dimension. Pakistan came into being, already separated into two parts: East and West, East Pakistan was more populated and, as the majority province, had a right in a democratic system to enjoy more political power. It was distasteful to West Pakistan, who considered themselves physically and racially superior to the Bengalis.

This outlook led to the prevention of the democratic process. No constitution was drafted and no general elections were held in fear of the Bengali domination. All the times, on the contrary, attempts were made to counter the Bengali majority by introducing the formula of parity and by uniting the four provinces of West Pakistan into One Unit. In the 1971 general elections, when the Bengali won the majority, another partition took place.

The separation of Bangadesh is not the end of majority-minority conflict. Now Punjab has emerged as a majority province and become a threat to other three minority provinces. Democracy has meant the domination of the Punjab. This fear has strengthened the nationalistic feeling in the three provinces and question of nationalities has become a problem in our politics greatly undermining the rising class conflicts.

In the absence of the democratic process and the greater emphasis on the ideology of Pakistan, the process of Pakistani nation-making could not take place. The conflict between minority and majority became multi-dimensional-religious, racial, cultural and linguistic minorities emerged asserting their own identity. Everywhere, the fear of the majority was haunting. The Shia were afraid of the Sunnis, the Ahmedis were afraid of the Shias and the Sunnis, the Hindus were afraid of all the Muslim sects.

Pakistani society was further divided into different cultural and linguistic groups and minorities such as the Khojas, the Bohras, and the Memons. As there was no participation of the people in the government and administration, they lost faith in the governing institutions and organised themselves

individually. Now each minority group has its own separate residential areas, schools, hospitals, welfare societies, mosques, clubs and community centers.

Partition, separation and secession are considered the only solution of all the existing economic, political and social problems. This attitude divides the society into different religious, cultural and racial groups and Biradaris, separating them from the mainstreams of society. There is no link which can unite them together as one nation. Thus, there is no such thing as Pakistani nation in existence.

The minority-majority conflict further creates a number of other problems. The minority keeps a low profile in order not to invite the wrath of the majority. A sense of deprivation, alienation and insecurity saps their energies and prevents them from taking part in national activities. The recent example is that of the Ahmedis who are prohibited from calling themselves Muslims and are hunted wherever they are; it may be the army, the civil service, business or some other professions. The result is that as a sect, they feel insecure. Consequently, there is a trend that the affluent among them are migrating to Western countries and those who are forced to stay, have lost interest in participating in the development of the society.

The recent phenomenon of the MQM (Mohajir Qaumi Movement) is another example of a minority united on the linguistic basis. It is the outcome of the absence of Pakistan's nation-building process and the emergence of four nationalities. Found outcast, the Mohajirs asserted their cultural identity. The phenomenon is cultural, as well as the result of socio-economic grievances.

In the past, whenever a minority was deprived of its basic rights it reacted against the society either by resorting to violence or by cooperating with the foreign power in case of invasion. When the Hindus were not treated well by the Talpur rulers and the father of the famous Hindu Seth Naomal was forcibly converted to Islam, he helped the British in conquering Sindh.

It is a reciprocal process. When a society provides equal rights to the minority, the majority responds with the same spirit. But when a society fails to protect a minority, it produces opponents and dissidents who are termed traitors by the majority.

This is our basic contemporary conflict which has its roots in history. The minority-majority conflict could be solved in Pakistan only by secularising and democrastising the society. Participation of every citizen in a democratic process would weaken the minority complex and stimulate the process of Pakistani nation-making.

PAKISTAN AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Pakistan is a country without a nation. The historical process which is required to make a nation has not yet begun in Pakistan and the different nationalities could not find a common link to unite and become a nation. At present, there are four nationalities in Pakistan who are asserting for their cultural and political identity.

After the partition, an attempt was made to unite the different nationalities on the basis of religion, but the political and economic interests and the exploitation of weak nationalities made such efforts futile. In the absence of any common language, the country obviously could not be united on linguistic basis. The weakness of the democratic institutions and the restriction on freedom of expression were detrimental to the process of nation-making. Therefore, the gap was filled by the nationalist movements in the provinces to assert their identity, and to fight for their rights. Regional nationalism flourished and thus emerged the question of nationalities. It was the result of strong center and the domination of the Punjab army, bureaucracy, and industry.

The nationalist movements in the provinces are headed by the upper and middle classes, using them as a pressure to get high and lucrative posts in the bureaucracy and allowing them to control the provincial government for achieving their own ends. There are two characteristics of these movements: The upper and middle classes use them for the fulfillment of their personal ambitions, but at the same time, they are mobilising the people to broaden the movements in order to get their support.

Every attempt was made by those movements to remove the class tension through patronisation of the cultural institutions. Only those institutions are preserved and promoted which protect the interests of the upper and middle classes. Thus, the institutions, of fedudalism, heroworship, saints, shrines, and holy tombs are patronised. The concept of noble family keeps alive because it provides protection to the Sayyids, Ulema, and Sufis. These cultural and religious

institutions became integral part of nationalist movements, and the irony is that to please the people, every government in power, fully utilises these institutions such as by paying homage to the shrines, and organising the Urs. Once these institutions became symbols of nationalism, they assumed a position of sacredness. A common man regards them part of his cultural traditions and defends them with vigour and devotions. This made these movements reactionary. Never a slogan is raised against the feudal class, and never a word is said about the basic rights of the people. Hunger, poverty, and illeteracy are not their problems. They mobilise the people not on the basis of their fundamental rights, but on such crises which have nothing to do with their problems. The life of these movements depends on crises and therefore, it is their efforts to create them one after the other.

Due to these reactionary tendencies, these movements could not play any positive role in Pakistan. Neither they supported class struggle, nor created any class consciousness among the masses. In Pakistan, the basis of contradictions among the nationalities is not cultural but the economic ones. The ruling classes of Punjab for protection and preserving their economic interests suppressed the small nationalities. If the economic disparity is removed through class struggle, the cultural backwardness of the nationalities would be automatically eliminated.

The ruling classes of Punjab are responsible for the exploitation of the small nationalities. The masses of Punjab should not be blamed for what their ruling classes did and still are doing. If all classes are accused, the Punjab nationalism would emerge in extreme and chauvinistic form, and it would become difficult for small nationalities to encounter it; Punjab would be united in reaction and exploit them more ruthlessly. In order to weaken the Punjabi nationalism, it is necessary to have link with its masses. A unity of all oppressed people would alienate the ruling classes and their alienation would be their great weakness. To make the Punjabi ruling classes isolated from the people and then to hit them hard is the only strategy which could be used in fighting against them.

It is a fact that the nationalist movement of small provinces is the result of the exploitation of the ruling classes of Punjab, now if the Sindhi nationalists, treat their cultural and religious minorities on the same basis, these minorities, in reaction, would assert for their separate identity. The MQM is the result of this attitude. It is a fact that no one has been completely crushed nor had been forced to live on the terms of the majority. Separation then becomes the only solution. The slogan of Sindhudesh is the product of the same process and the idea of separate province for Mohajir would be the logical conclusion of this policy. Paule Ferero says that there is an exploiter hidden in every oppressed person. Unless this exploiter is wiped out, the minorities cannot find justice.

We should not expect the ruling classes to solve the problems of nationalities. The uneven development of the provinces is in their interest. The only way to solve this and other social and economic problems is the class struggle.

DOUSING THE FIRE

In every society, educational institution play an important role in training a new generation to take the responsibilities of a changing world. To respond to the challenges of the time, new ideas emerge from these institutions, encouraging change in the outdated system. The teachers and students together initiate movement which accelerates the process of change.

Educational institutions can play a vital role in society. That is why dictatorial and authoritarian governments always try to curb the radical character of these institutions and use them for their own propaganda. Therefore, all fascist governments put restrictions on the independence of the educational institutions and supervise the activities of teachers and students. The appointment of teachers, admission of students, and syllabus is controlled by the state to check the growth of new ideas dangerous to their rule. These restrictions may prolong the rule of a dictator, but they strangle the vitality and creativeness of the educated people and make academic life burden-some.

One of the recent examples is of Germany whose universities were depopulated by the talented teachers who left their positions under the threat of Fascism and settled in different European countries. It took quite a long time, after the end of the war, to restore full academic life in German universities. At present, in third world countries, most of the creative and talented scholars, finding no opportunities in their own land, migrate to USA or Europe leaving behind second rate scholars. If this situation continues to persist in our society, our educational institutions will loose what integrity they have. No body will survive to challenge the status quo and outdated traditions.

Before the arrival of the British, the educational institutions of the Indian Sub-continent failed to respond to the challenges of European dominance in the world. Whatever was taught to students was not relevant to their society and its problems. They had no basis on which they could analyse the phenomenon of the rise of the European powers.

The change in our educational institutions occurred when the Britishers set up a new educational system in order to fulfill their imperial requirements. Although the motives of the colonial power were not to educate the Indians on radical lines, but even then, the students, through the knowledge of the English language, discovered a world of new order. It was as a result of western education that an educated class imbued with democratic, secular, and nationalist ideas, emerged and took active part in the Freedom Movement.

During the British period, besides teaching, the system of extra-curricular activities was introduced and students were encouraged to take part in debates, music, drama, paintings, and sports. In order to keep the dignity of the institutions, the police was not allowed to enter the premises without the permission of the head of the school/college.

After partition, most of these traditions survived. And in the early period of independence, students struggled for the cause of democracy and human rights. They raised their voice whenever our rulers made attempts to remain in power through conspiracy and manipulations. Soon, however, the attitude of students became intolerable to our rulers, and they adopted severe measures to curb their movements. In the 1950s' students demonstrations were violently dispersed and their leaders were put into jails.

However, the restructuring of the educational institutions was done during Ayub Khan's tenure, who after abrogating the constitution, established his dictatorship. As a dictator, he was intolerant of any political opposition, so he systematically adopted a policy to crush the democratic structure of the educational institutions. Therefore, the process to depoliticise the students began and they were advised not to take part in politics. Student unions were banned and all extra-curricular activities were likewise stamped down on. As a result, the cultural life of the institutions came to an end and students were confined only to classrooms. In the second stage, the syllabus was changed in order to discredit the democratic system and to promote hero worship and a false sense of patriotism. Furthermore, it was suggested that to bear suffering

and endure exploitation in the name of the security and welfare of the country was a noble thing to do. During Ayub Khan's rule the sanctity of the institutions was violated and police raided hostels and mishandled both students and teachers.

The character of the educational institutions was further changed when the Ayub government banned political parties and suspended their activities. These political parties, to maintain their existence, organised student wings in institutions throughout the country. Soon these student parties filled the vacuum of the unions. In the absence of any election, voting, and democratic procedure, these parties resorted to violent methods to assert their authority over their opposition. This attitude created Fascistic tendencies among the student parties which completely changed their character. They no longer remained champions of democracy and human rights but adopted violent methods to fulfill their vested interests. Therefore, after Ayub Khan, there was no student movement against dictatorship, exploitation, and against human rights violation.

Once the students were cut off from the democratic movement, their relations with the people were also broken. In the early phase, the people always cooperated with students; now this close relationship has come to an end because the aims of the students and the people differ greatly. Instead of love and sympathy, the average citizen harbours fear towards students. To them they are rascals, terrorists, and miscreants. Thus the result of the process of depolitisation is that the educational institutions and the students no longer remain a threat to the ruling classes. The potential power to change society has been successfully crushed and in the future there is no hope that there will be any change in the structure of our educational institutions.

IDEOLOGY OR BUST

As an ideological state, the dilemma of Pakistan is to justify its ideology inspite of its setbacks and failures. The history of Pakistan from the very beginning is the history of disillusionment and disappointment; from experiments in constitution making and organising political institutions to formulating cultural or social traditions. Instead of realising analysing and subsequently rectifying incompetent decisions taken under cover of ideology, attempts are made to justify the wrong judgements. But the process of disintegration, which is unleashed by social, economic and political forces, can not be checked in such a manner. The ruling classes of Pakistan are not competent enough to solve the problems of the nation which require not only knowledge but a sense of commitment as well. It is their need to create a sense of false patriotism among the people in order to silence all opposition and to suppress any challenge to their power.

The policy of promoting emotional patriotism is mostly followed by societies which are under dictatorships or are ruled by some ideology. To thrust such a patriotism on people, various instruments and devices are employed. These include the creation of more heroes, establishing social and cultural myths, and infusing false pride and a false sense of dignity by writing national songs and anthems and propagating them through radio and T.V.

Today, when our political, social, and economic condition is deteriorating, we are relying more and more on the achievements of our heroes, and the greatness of our past and present leaders. Slowly and gradually the number of our heroes is increasing. Now we have two categories of heroes: national and regional. Both types of heroes are required to fill the hollowness of our lives. Similarly, attempts are made to celebrate "memorable days" such as August 14 as Independence Day and March 23 as Pakistan Day.

In the early period of Pakistan, March 23 was not regarded as significant and there were no celebrations on that day. The day became important only after the Independence of

Bangladesh, a development that brought the two nation theory under question and seriously challenged the very basis of the ideology of Pakistan. At that juncture, the ruling classes of Pakistan used all sorts of methods to justify the concept of the two nation theory. One step taken in this direction was the decision to start officially celebrating march 23 as Pakistan Day.

However, there are some questions about the Pakistan Resolution. Usually it is said that the Resolution was passed unanimously by the people present in the meeting. I talked to some of those who attended the meeting and they said that .hen the Resolution was read a majority of the people could not hear a single word; and most of them did not understand it at all. This gives the impession that it was read, and announced by the leaders as passed without bothering to know the opinion of the people. It is not recorded whether people expressed their opinion by raising their hands or shouting `yes' loudly. The leaders, after formally reading the Resolution, believed that people agreed with what they had decided for their benefit.

Therefore, the fact is that the Pakistan Resolution was drafted and passed by the leadership of the Muslim League. In the beginning it was not considered important enough to be celebrated but later on due to political requirements it was decided to celebrate it and make it a public holiday. The motive behind giving significance to the day is not to make people conscious of history but to infuse a sense of false patriotism in people that can make them bear the burden of their ignored grievances, tolerate the repressions of successive authoritarian governments, and put up with the corruption of the ruling classes. The celebrations are not for the benefit of the people but for the stability of the corrupt and inefficient ruling classes.

DEATH OF MUGHAL NOBILITY AND A LESSON FOR PAKISTANI ELITE

The death of Aurangzeb accelerated the process of the Mughal decline which caused widespread disorder, chaos, and discontentment. The emperor who used to be the fountain of power, had lost his authority and become a puppet in the hands of the nobles. The Mughal nobility undertook the task to make and unmake emperors. This led to the division of the monolithic Mughal nobility, and different factions of nobles emerged to exploit the situation in their favour. Every group manipulated to place his own candidate on the throne and, taking advantage of power and influence, amassed wealth, punished and tortured their opponents, and strengthened their authority in the hope to rule for ever.

The outcome of the whole process provides us an opportunity to study the decline and fall of the Mughals in the Indian subcontinent. As there were different groups of nobility, each group manipulated to weaken the other. This tendency encouraged conspiracies and intrigues. Everybody was polite to each other but nobody trusted anybody. Hypocrisy became the catchword for success.

Besides this deterioration in the social values, the increasing number of the nobility greatly affected the economic structure of the Mughal society. Even noble demanded a *jagir* (land) in order to support the emperor. Soon the stock of *jagirs* was exhausted and there was no more land available to accommodate the nobles. As the nobles could not survive without *jagirs*, the new step was taken to allot them from the crown land *(Khalsa)*.

The reduction of the crown land reduced the income of the emperor and it became difficult for him to sustain the royal household and the retinue.

As political condition deteriorated, more problems emerged. When the crown land got exhausted, it was suggested that the king occupy the '*watan*' *jagirs* of the Rajput rulers, although it was the practice of the Mughal rulers to keep the

watan jagirs intact as a symbol of loyalty of the Rajput rulers. However, this attempt failed because the emperor was not powerful enough to snatch them from the warrior Rajputs.

When the allotment of *jagirs* became impossible, then it was decided to pay in cash to the new nobles. With cash payment, the problem was that as the state treasury mostly remained empty and the royal income was irregular, the nobles failed to get their salaries in time. This led to the practice of taking money on high interest from the *Sahukars* (moneylenders) in order to keep their households.

Another phenomenon of the process of the decline was that outward pomp and show became the symbol of respect. Therefore, the nobles strove to acquire more high-sounding titles to raise their social status. The result was that soon these titles lost their significance and became meaningless. The same happened to the *mansab* (rank) which lost all its respect and became a butt of sarcasm.

Bereft of all privileges, the nobility in the end demanded respect from the people on the basis of the family and pure blood. When this also failed to keep their status high, they isolated themselves in shame and cut off their contact from the society. They confined themselves to their *havelis* (palaces) as they did not have proper dress and conveyance to come out. As they refused to work below their status, they plunged into poverty and misery. After 1857, the Mughal nobility disappeared, leaving no trace in history.

If we compare the present stituation of Pakistan, we can find many parallels in the history of the later Mughals. The elite of Pakistan is exploiting the resources of the country up to the extent of their extinction. Each government, in order to win the support of the MNAs and MPAs, grants them generous funds, plots, and loans. The result is that the elite is amassing and using the resources at the cost of the country and its people. In the end, the result will be disastrous not only to the country and its people but to the elite also. History is ready to teach us a lesson but nobody bothers to learn anything from past experience.

followers of the ruling class

VIP SYNDROME AND THE REVENGE OF HISTORY

When a society bereft of all values and virtues sinks deep in moral degradation and becomes hollow, its energies dry up to the extent that it fails to contribute anything to civilisation and culture. Scholarship, skill, merit, intelligence, history and integrity, all lose their credential, only power and wealth remain to be respected.

Those who possess these two demons are impotent to add anything to art and literature. They know that if power and wealth, which they inherit mostly by virtue of their family, is taken away, they would be reduced to the status of menial workers. Power and wealth conceal all their deformities and weaknesses. Intellectual inferiority and mental hollowness make them conscious of their social status in the society, therefore, they emphasise protocols and privileges. Only through this they can assert their high position and status.

There are some parallels between our present society and the later Mughals when the Emperor and the nobility had lost all political power. Once the very source of their respect and honour was lost, they became very much conscious of the prerogatives. The Mughal Emperor, reduced to a puppet under the British, tried to conceal his humiliation in the garb of the royal prerogatives and demanded that the British resident, governor general, and other high official pay him *Kornish, Taslim and Nazar.*

He made attempts to assert his authority by not allowing the British officers to sit in his presence. But these outward prerogatives and protocols failed to strengthen the political power of the Emperor. Behind this facade was nothing but hollowness which ultimately caused the collapse of the Empire.

Same was the attitude of the Mughal nobility who, after their moral and economic decline, struggled in vain to keep their social status by observing homages. They jealously watched to see who bowed in respect and who rose from his seat to welcome them.

The classic example is of Mirza Ghalib who refused to serve in the college because the principal did not come to receive him. He referred to remain idle and jobless, rather than to work below his social status. The Mughal ruling class, after losing power and wealth, took pride in their family lineage and demanded the people to respect them and treat them as superior.

They were more conscious of family status and high caste and, in spite of their poverty, had contempt for the lower caste people. Though the Emperors and the nobility miserably failed to protect the society from external invasions and internal problems, they expected that people to pay respect to them. They failed to recognise their impotence and hollowness. The result was that they were finally wiped out and nobody mourned their demise.

In Pakistan, the ruling classes neither have intelligence, nor honesty, nor scholarship, and nor any skill, but demand from the common people respect because of their social status based on ill-gotten money and corrupt power.

To distinguish themselves from common people they call themselves VIP and VVIP. Their anonymity is discovered only when they demand privileges and prerogatives; otherwise from their appearance and behaviour they look like ordinary people. Their intellectual poverty and inferiority complex are compensated by rights and privileges. This is the reason why they are so conscious about minor government official greeting them. They become angry if security officer search them at the airport. In the railways, airports, and hospitals there are VIP rooms to separate them from people. All the time their effort is to distinguish them from the common people. We have seen the end of the Mughal nobility; now we have to wait and see the revenge of history against our ruling classes.

OUR FEUDAL DEMOCRACY

The causes of the decay and downfall of the Pakistani society are manifold and it is not possible to determine one single cause for the disintegration of the society. However, the history of the Muslim community in the Indian Subcontinent provides us enough material to understand the process of decline of the Muslim power in India and, with the help of it, to analyse the present crisis.

In the early history, the Muslim conquerors founded their rule purely on ethnic and racial grounds and excluded the local converted Muslims from the social, economic and political privileges. The policy of monopolising of all resources in a single ethnic group deprived not only the multitude of population but also other social and ethnic groups to get their due share. That was the reason that during the Sultanate period (1206-1526) one dynasty after another came into power and consequently acquired all material resources for its own use. Each dissident group in this period found the solution of its grievances in secession from the center and established its own independent state in the province. Hence, there arose Muslim provincial dynasties of the Daccan, Gujrat, Malwa, Jaunpur. It diffused the Muslim power in India and weakened their strength, therefore, when the Mughals were invited by the angry Afghan nobles to get rid of their King, they easily defeated the Lodhi dynasty and established their own rule (1526).

Among the Mughal emperors, Akbar (1556-1605) was wise enough to broaden the Mughal aristocracy by including the Rajputs, but his successors failed to understand the growing political consciousness of the Marhattas, Jats and Sikhs who wanted more power to rule in their own area. Instead of sharing power with them, the central authorities declared them rebels and suppressed their resistance with an iron hand . The Mughal aristocracy, one of the richest and privileged in the contemporary world, refused to surrender their privileges and share them with other groups. Although in the end, they failed to sustain their position and status and lost everything. It is fully evident from the facts that when the British made attempts

to overthrow the Mughal aristocracy, nobody came to defend their properties and riches.

The remanants of the old and new feudal class survived during the British period as collaborators bereft of political power, but the partition of 1947 provided them the opportunity to acquire political power and to mould all political, social and economic institutions to serve their interest.

For example, the political system of democracy, which is regarded as panacea for all ills, has totally failed in Pakistan becoming a tool in the hands of the feudal ruling class to use it for preserving the feudal culture and its values.

One of the important characteristics of the feudal culture is the system of patronage. As the feudal lord possesses political, social, and economic powers, the people look up to him for protection and favour. His authority increases when he is elected as MNA or MPA. This makes him an unchallenged lord in his constituency. People seek his favour in all matters-admission of children in schools, getting medical treatment in government hospitals, applying for jobs etc. In all such cases they implore the feudal lord to help them, and never getting the courage to assert their rights.

Recently, we have observed that the elected members slowly and gradually are increasing their privileges. For example now every MNA and MPA has the authority to grant 3 telephone connections every month, a novel method to oblige people. A certain amount is allotted to him for the developmental work in his constituency. Besides these, there are a number of privileges which a feudal lord, by virtue of having political power, enjoys.

The result of the patronage system is that first, people lose their faith and confidence in the state institutions and rely on the favours of their feudal patron; second, favour from the above is regarded as an act of kindness rather than as matter of rights; third, if somebody is outside the system of patronage, it becomes impossible for him to survive. The system does not require merit, honesty, hardwork, and integrity, but flattery, corruption, and mediocracy. Further, this system creates

distance between the ruling classes and the masses. To make them distinct from the commoners, the words of VIP and VVIP are coined violating the spirit of equality, fraternity, and liberty.

As majority of the members of the legislative bodies belong to the feudal class, they legislate those laws which could preserve the status quo and check any process of modernisation. The "power of the majority" in a feudal and reactionary democracy becomes a terror to all enlightened and secular-mind people. The legislative bodies, through democratic procedure, pass such laws which curb their activities and marginalise their role. The minorities are rightly threatened by the majority. We have already experienced how the majority of MPs declared the Ahmadis as non-Muslims. The Shariat Law is one of the examples how democratic institutions could be used to implement such laws in future.

I would like to draw your attention to another characteristic of the feudal democracy: Whenever, the feudals control the executive and legislative institutions, crimes against women increase. Kadnapping, molesting and harassing of women become common. What is going on now is the proof of this statement.

In a feudal culture, the democratic tradition of tolerance is not practised. All opponents with the help of the state institutions are tortured and imprisoned. Revenge rather than tolerance is the policy followed by the feudal ruling class.

My conclusion is, that in a backward society which is dominated by oppressed institutions and reactionary ideas, the introduction of developed political and economic systems, instead of liberating the society, provides new tools to the backward institutions to be more repressive. Therefore, merely the introduction of the democratic system in Pakistani society is not a solution for our problems unless the feudal system is not abolished and the social and economic structure is not changed.

Moreover, monopolising of all resources by an ethnic group creates bitterness and hatred. The concentration of all power in the center, instead of strengthening, weakens the state

structure. Therefore, decentralisation, equal distribution of resources, and full political participation is required to check the process of disintegration.

GUILT EDGED - THE GERMAN EXPERIENCE

Besides the defeat and humiliation, the Germans, after the second war, faced the question of guilt. The discovery of the Nazi crimes, destruction of the war, and relentless propaganda of the Allies, psychologically depressed the whole nation. To reduce the hostillity of the European nations, the German intellectuals and politicians openly confessed the guilt of the German nation as whole. The President of the Federal Republic of Germany Prof. Theodor Heuss pleaded that the German people must surmount past. It should not be forgotten and excluded from the German mind. On the contrary it should be shifted to the young generation. The echo of this gilt is equally sounded what Rodalf Augustein, the editor of the Spiegel wrote: "I consider it a sacred duty for us to keep before our eyes what fearful things we Germans have inflicted on our neighbours over the past fifty years."

However, Karl Jasper, in his lecture on *"die schuldfrage"* (question of guilt) which he delivered at Heidelberg University, tried to analyse the rise of Hitler and how in his early period he was fully supported by the European politicians and industrialists. In 1938, Churchill in an open letter published in the Times, wrote about Hitler: "Were England to suffer a national disaster comparable to that of Germany in 1918, I should pray God to send us a man of your strength of mind and will". Jasper, however, argued that what happened in the war, it was the responsibility of the individuals and the whole nation could not be blamed for the war crimes.

The effect of the Nazi period on the minds of the Germans people was that they tried to forget the recent past and made attempts to exclude it from the history. Therefore in the German educational institutions, the history was taught upto 19th century and the following events were just ignored.

However, in the question of guilt, the motives of the Allies and the Germans were different. The Allies, as a matter of fact, were threatened by the German past and it was in their interests to demoralise the Germans by keeping the Nazi past alive. This was the best method to control the amibitions of the German nation. They were successful in their approach because

the Germans adopted a defensive, apologetic, and reserve tone and failed to assert their point of view. The German intellectuals and politicians, on the other hand, sincerely confessed the crimes committed by the Nazis and declared that "covering up or minimizing crimes will suggest that we secretly approve of them."

However, the attitude of the Allies was different as far as Japan was concerned. She was not accused of the war crimes and soon liberated herself from the past. Chung Ho Choe, a Korean intellectual, compares the position of Japan and Germany and points out why Japan was absolved from the guilt? In his opinion the Nagasaki and Hiroshima changed the image of Japan from injurer to injured and she became the most pitiable victim of the war and emerged as a spokesman of peace. The Hiroshima sentimentalism subdued the guilt of Japanese. However, the difference between Japan and Germany was that the victims of the Japanese crimes were non-white countries, who had weaker voice, while the victim of Germany were Europeans and had a strong and loud voice to express their woes.

Chung Ho argued that as far as killing was concerned, more Germans lost their lives in the Allies bombing of Dresden (3,00,000) higher than the number of deaths in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The discrimination between Japan and Germany had two motives: it was the interest of the Allies to prevent Germany as becoming a military power again' and it was the interest of Israel and her Zoinist friends that after highlighting the Nazi brutalities against the Jews, to provide a moral justification of the existence of Israel and further to justify their crimes against the Palestinians. After transforming themselves as oppressed, the Zionists appeared as victims, fighting battle for there survival. The present policy of Israel is that as they take sever actions against the Palestinians; they project the Nazi crimes to minimize their own brutalities.

The whole scenario of politics and the question of guilt changed after the world war and the following events showed that te question of guilt was not a genuine effort by the Allies to prevent war in future but just to condemn Germany. The American involvement in the Vietnam war and her crimes

against the Vietnamese people shattered the whole concept of war guilt. The American government and public, instead of condemning, glorified the murderer of Mailai massacre.

On the other hand the state terror of Israel against the Palestinians has broken all moral values. The Israeli leaders, time and again, have declared their designs to crush the Palestinians. In 1989, Yitzal Rabin, their Defence Secretary, openly said "The Palestinians will be crushed, will die or turn into human dust and the waste of society, and join the most improverished classes in the Arab countries." Recently (1991) Yitzhak Shamir declared that the "State of Israel is expanding, its population is forever growing, therefore, the faithful, solid and interpid Jews who will never give up a lump of earth of Eretz Israel even if they have to water it an ocean of sweat and tear." There is no sense of guilt but a moral justification to annihilate a race. Therefore, whenever there is any outcry against their crimes, the specter of Holocaust and the memory of the Nazi concentration camps and gas chambers is revived and the world keeps silence over the horrible crimes of Israel.

The problem of the Germans is that they are overburdened by the crimes against the Jews and have no courage to condemn Israeli crimes against the Palestinians which are in fact, more sophisticated and refined than the Nazis.

Recently there is an attempt by the German historians to get rid of the war guilt and rehabilitate themselves. In this effort, different historians interpreted the Nazi past differently. The conservative historians argue that the emergence of Nazism in Germany was the result of industrialisation without any bourgeois revolution. The middle class was bribed by awarding feudalistic privileges and the proletariat was outsted from any participation. The ruling classes used the petty bourgeois against the democratic movement which resulted in National Socialism. As a matter of fact, Nazism had no roots in Germany. It became popular because of Hitler and as a consequence of Stalinism. To prevent it, Germany should seek its past tradition of the Christian morality, and the Prussian virtues.

The liberal historians condemned the Prussian legacy of militarism and authoritarianism and argued that only through political democratisation and social openness the germs of Fascism and Nazism can be crushed.

In 1986, there was a conference on the topic "To whom does German History belong?" In this conference, it was discussed that inspite of basic changes in the German society the specter of the Nazism haunted the Germans so much so that they failed to concentrate on the urgent issues. Therefore, the time has come to reinterpret the Nazi past. One of the conservative German historians, Ernst Nolte provided a moral justification of the Nazism. He argued that Nazism was the response of communism. Hitler followed Stalin's pattern in mass deportation, shooting, torture, and extermination His race murder corresponded to communists class murder. Both attempted to solve the problems connected with industrialisation by removing a large group of people. The Nazis, to defend Europe from communism, needed an ideology which was found in anti-semitism. The idea of "the Final solution" was a copy of "Gulag Archipelago." Both, Nazism and communism shared same rhetoric; both relied on the proletrariats and identified bourgeoisie as their enemies. Hitler became anti-semtic after the declaration of Chain Weizman in 1939 that the Jews from all over the world would fight on Britain's side against Germany. The Nazi policy of killing had so many parallel in other countries that it can be regarded as normal 20th century barbarity. He argued that the German history is distorted because it was written from the perspective of the victors.

Another historian Andreas Hillgruber points out that in condemnation of the Nazi atrocities, the crimes of the Russian army are ignored who committed countless murder, rapes and mass deportation. As far as the German army was concerned it fought according to the German traditions. Patriotism and the sense of duty had been the motives. The British historian Liddle-hart wrote that, "The German army in the field on the whole observed the rules of war better than it did in 1914-18." The soldiers and officers were not aware of the Jews massacre. They were discovered after the war. He further argued that it

was individual responsibility of Hitler because majority of the German people were unaware about the killing.

Michael Stuermer examined the obsession with the guilt which has become a great hindrance in the development of national identity. Therefore, he declared "It is time to give history a meaning - *sinnstiftung* - on the basis of which the German can build a genuine sense of nationhood." He further said, "We cannot live by making our past - into a permanent source of endless guilt feelings." He said that the Weimer Republic was collapsed by heavy burden of guilt laid on by the Treaty of Versailles, so the repetition must be avoided before it becomes too late.

However, there is positive impact of the sense of guilt on the German society. The full knowledge of the horrors of war transformed it into a pacifist society. Since then, the German people denounce war, preach for human rights, condemn armament, and nuclear weapons. As they have experienced Fascism and dictatorship, they support democratic movements throughout the world. Though it is difficult for the Germans to project their new image and get rid of completely from the Nazi past, but slowly they are gaining ground especially in the Third World Countries.

If the sense of guilt creates such a positive effect, then why it should be confined only to Germans? Why should it not be extended to the Britishers, French, Americans, and the Japanese?

LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

After the end of the second world war, the two German states passed through different political, social, and economic experience which shaped the structure of the two societies on quite different lines. Therefore, when the question of the Nazi past arose, the East German historians adopting the Marxist-Leninst approach analysed the Fascist period and applied the theory which was propounded in 1920 by the Comintern; according to this, Capitalism, in its phase of weakness collaborated with the conservative forces and integrated the workers by raising the slogan of patriotism in order to weaken the process of revolution.

Thus, the responsibility to reconstruct and reinterpret the Nazi past lay on the shoulders of the West German historians who by applying different research techniques, made attempts to locate the Nazi period in the German history. These historians not only used the Marxist approach but adopted different non-Marxist theories as well, to understand the Nazi phenomenon such as the structuralist and *Alltiaggeschichte* (history of daily life).

Under the Bavarian Project, efforts were made to interpret the Nazi period by examing the popular opinion and behaviour to bring about an analyses of the period from the grass root's level. It was also attempted to historicize the Nazi past and then examine it in the long term historical process of the German history.

In their attempts to interpret the Nazi Past, the German historians were vigilantly watched by the historians of Europe, America, and especially of Israel who were very much concerned about any positive interpretation or rehabilitation of the Nazi era.

For instance, the Israeli historians severely criticised the attempt to historicize Germany's Nazi past on the ground that in this case the Nazi period would become a normal part of history whereas it should be treated as abnormal and as a period of aberration. Even those historians, who believe that

historians have no right to pass moral judgements, argued that the Nazi period must be condemned on moral grounds.

Naturally, under these circumstances, the task of the German historians became difficult. But against all odds, their interpretations provided an insight into the phenomenon that was needed to understand the emergence of Nazism..

The first question was how to treat the Nazi period: as an accident or an outcome of Germany's historical process. The European and American historians argued that it was the result of the political and social processes of the German history. According to this view, the popular support of the people to the Nazi party proved that the German, as a nation, carried the germs of the racial superiority and dreamt to rule over the world.

Fritz Fischer, a noted German historian, advocated in 1960s that the healthy historical process of German history was broken in the first world war when the ruling classes of Germany ignited the war sentiments among the people in order to fulfil their imperial ambitions. Later on, these sentiments were exploited by the Nazis to win popularity. This approach, in consequence, ushered in a dispute among the historians and divided them into pro and anti-Fischer.

Some of the historians disagreed to dub the Nazi era as an era of Fascism on the ground that the theory of Fascism was an Italian product and greatly differed from the German experience. On the contrary, Nazism championed the theory of race and fully controlled the state and the *Volk* (the people). Moreover, it had the ambition to conquer the world and reshape it according to its racial ideology.

Fascism in Itlay appealed only to the elite and had less control over the state and people. Thus, it is wrong to equate Nazism with Fascism. Nazism had its own identity that was thought to lead Germany into a glorious period under the chrismatic leadership of Hitler.

Some of the liberal sociologist historians such as David Schoembaum and Ralf Dahrendorf interpreted the Nazi era as a

factor to accelerate the social revolution in Germany. The Nazis, according to their arguments, after assuming power, brought changes in the structure and social values of the society. They eliminated all those conservative institutions which threatened them and made the task easy for the future changes. The collapse of the Nazis broke the authoritarian structure which had dominated Germany since Bismark and served as a prologue to a period of modern and liberal democracy that followed it.

To examine the Nazi period with the help of *Alltaggeschichte* (history of daily life) is a novel approach to understand the history with the populist point of view. The historians investigated the social mobility, pattern and behaviour of the people under the Nazi rule. Below the barbarism and horror of the Nazi government could be seen the normal life of the German masses.

To probe and analyse the past is the duty of the historians and this understanding determines the present and future directions. The German nation has learnt well from the experience of a tyrannical dictatorship and as a result is determined not to repeat it.

3

HERO AND HEROWORSHIP

MAKING OF MYTHS

Most of the religious symbols which today appear as sacrosanct were not in origin so holy and sacred. They are the product of time and their myths slowly come into shape after a long passage of time. Later, their origin is forgotten and, cut off from the roots, they become beliefs.

The symbol of crucifixion was not popular in the early period of Christianity. The reason was that in the early period, in order to convert people, Christian missionaries avoided all such symbols which created depression and helplessness. Only when Christianity was fully established and found state patronage, the character of the symbol of crucifixion changed and, in the 10th century, it appeared on the church buildings in significant places. Later, the symbol was used by the church authorities to inspire people to sacrifice and to strengthen their beliefs. The symbol now occupies the most important place in Christian religion.

Similarly, the concept of virgin Mary emerged in the 11th century. It did not appear in the early phase when the life of

the people was simple and the image could not inspire the faithful. Later, the Christian society underwent a social change and the status of women was raised. The famous historian and art critic Kenneth Klark observed that "it must have been a result of the crusades that the returning warriors brought back an admiration for the womanly virtues of gentleness and compassion". Now, the symbol inspires love and tender feelings in the Christians all over the world.

How the symbols are transformed into a myth is indicated by the elevation of Khawaja Moinuddin Ajmeri as one of the greatest saints of the Indian subcontinent. The Khawaja, after his arrival in India and settlement at Ajmer, influenced a group of people who became his disciples. After his death, his grave was soon abandoned and his disciples confined to a group of small number of people. Throughout the Sultanate period, the Khawaja remained in oblivion. It is said that once Akbar, while travelling, heard some songs of his disciples which greatly pleased him. He enquired about their sect and their *pir*. It was the time when Akbar was young and in search of some spiritual guidance. He decided to visit the tomb of the Khawaja. On his visit he not only paid homage to the saint, but gave orders to constructs his shrine and provided buildings for the pilgrims. He was so devoted in this period that he used to visit the Khawaja's tomb every year.

The royal patronage made the Khawaja famous and soon the number of his disciples increased. To please the kings, the nobles and the courtries donated financial gifts to the shrine. Slowly, his fame spread throughout India and people began to pay homage to the Khawaja. Akbar's successors followed his traditions and added more buildings in the surroundings and awarded land for its finances. He became the patron saint of the Mughal royal dynasty.

Now there is a host of literature on his life and work. A number of miracles are attributed to him. He is affectionately called the Khawaja Sahib by Muslims as well as by Hindus. His shrine has become an important place where annual *urs* is celebrated with grandeur.

The tragedy is that once the myths are formed and deepened in the minds of the people then it becomes a difficult task to break them and trace their origin. Faith can be defeated only by rationality and it is rationality that most of our historians lack.

WAR WITHOUT HEROES?

Most of the heroes in history are the product of war. The war, in the history of mankind, has become a symbol of chivalry and bravery and such words as conqueror and victor are highly respectable in every language. To defeat and humiliate other nations satisfies the ego and makes a nation dignified. History glorifies all those conquerors who killed more people, won more battles, and ransacked more cities. To pay tibute to these heroes, their statues are erected in public places and the streets of the cities are named after their achievements. They are mentioned in text books, and glowing tributes are paid to them, the young generation is asked to follow their footsteps.

Every war and bloody clash produced heroes on both sides. If there is a conqueror on one side, the opposite party eulogised the defender who bravely faced the aggression and offered stubborn resistance. Alexander was no doubt a conqueror who defeated Porus, but Porus, because of his defiance, became a hero too. The same is the case of Mohammad Bin Qasim who won the battle against Raja Dahar, but after growth of Sindhi nationalism, Dahar became a hero who defended his country against foreign invasion.

Indian history of the colonial period is replete with such instances. Take the example of the event of 1857; the British called it the Mutiny because the great upheaval put the very existence of the British power in danger.

Therefore, those British generals and commanders who saved the empire from extinction became heroes and saviours. *Havelock*, Outram, Henry Lawrence, Colin Campbell, and Nichiolson found high place in British Indian History. As long as the British power remained strong, their Indian counterparts, who fought against them and sacrificed their lives, remained insignificant and mostly ignored. Only during the Freedom Movement and after the Independence in 1947, were these war heroes rehabilitated. Bahadar Sahib, the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Nana Sahib, Bakht Khan, the Maulana of Faizabad and Hazrat Begam are recognised as national heroes.

Sometimes, a defeated hero who fought valiantly and sacrificed his life, became more popular than the conqueror. Tipu Sultan is an example, who is more well know than Arther Wellesley, the man who defeated him. Seldom has it happened that the heroes of the warring nations are respected by each other. Napolean and general Rommel are examples of such instances, both respected by their adversaries.

As with war, heroes are products of high emotions. These make people blind to see any weakness in the heroes. Their crimes are over looked and they are adored as saviours. General Dyre, who was responsible for the Jillianwalla massacre. was acclaimed a hero by the British public. The same happened in our recent history when a Pakistani general who butchered the Bengalis in 1971 war, was praised rather than condemned.

In the present Gulf War, Saddam Husain is a dictator, Satan, and Hitler in the eyes of the Americans and its allies, but to the Muslim world he is a great hero who is challenging the might of the great powers. He has become a symbol of defiance and resistence.

This is the tragedy, that as a result of war, heroes and strong men emerge who ruthlessly suppress all popular movements. The First World War is the best example of this, it produced Hitler who unleashed a reign of terror. The Germans are sensible that they, instead of making Hitler a martyr, condemned him and instead of making heroes out of the Second World War, began a process of democratisation. This is the only alternative to prevent dictatorship, involving peoples participation.

COMMUNALISM AND HEROES

Heroes are revered in backward societies where different groups, in order to protect their vested interest, promote their images. They are created out of the need to serve political, social, and economic interests. Most of these great men were not regarded great in their own time by their contemporaries, but historians resurrect them from their anonymity and put them on high pedestal to be worshipped. They remain in vogue as long as they serve the purpose of different groups and are abandoned when the game is over.

Again, in backward societies, some of the heroes remain permanent and their place is not taken by any other new set of heroes, which indicates the stagnation of a society where the same heroes are worshipped generation after generation. It is also an indication that class patterns of a society remain the same and, therefore, their interest is served by the same heroes.

During the freedom movement against the British, the Indian nationalists created a number of heroes to inspire the illiterate and ignorant millions of Indians to follow in their footsteps and fight against foreign rule. There was no religions discrimination in producing the national heroes, therefore, 1857 served their purpose very well and provided them with a number of Hindus and Muslim heroes who were used by the nationalist politicians to serve their interests.

Another set of heroes was created when communal feelings between Hindus and Muslims intensified and the two communities searched for separate heroes. The main characteristic of these heroes was their victory against their adversaries. Thus, the Muslims revived the images of those conquerors and generals who defeated the Hindus, and the Hindus resurrected those who resisted the Muslim rulers and humiliated them. This approach changed the whole concept of history and the historians revived those individual who were long forgotten.

For example, Shivaji was rediscovered by an Englishman, James Douglas, who, in a guide-book on Bombay, pointed out

that Shivaji's Samadhi was lying unhonoured. The hint was taken by Tilak who immediately revived the image of Shivaji as the great hero because "through hero-worship of Shivaji the ideal of Maratha self-rule and glorification of Maharashtra would be achieved". Later on, Jadunath Sarkar, by writing the biographies of "Shivaji the Great" and "Aurangzeb", created a contrast between the two historical personalities.

Same is the case of Mohammad bin Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazna, and Mohammad Ghori who were described as holy warriors and crusaders against infidelity and blasphemy. From ordinary soldiers and generals, they were transformed into great conquerors and victors. The result was that each community took pride in its heroes, and following in their footsteps, fought against each other and shed blood to quench the thirst of hatred and animosity. Thus, the battle of communalism was not only fought in the present but also in the past. This battle will continue as long as both communities retain these heroes and revere them as their deliverers and call on them to help take revenge against their enemies. The image of these heroes, instead of creating peace and harmony, provoke violence and terror and lead the society towards self-destruction.

REVOLUTIONS AND HEROES

Every revolution produces heroes who are not only honoured but venerated by the masses. The main characteristic of a revolution is to champion the cause of the have-nots and to overthrow the old system based on privileges. After the consolidation of the new system, the leaders of the revolution become heroes and soon they place themselves above from any criticism.

The French Revolution of 1789 is the one which differs from this pattern. First of all, the French revolution was not a single unit but divided into many parts and phases, and in each phase, opposite and antithetical groups were in conflict with each other on the ideological basis. These groups severely criticised the other and pointed out their political blunders. As the revolution pulled down the oppressive institutions of the state, there was freedom of expression; freedom to oppose and freedom to challenge.

The political condition was so chaotic that no group single handedly established its political domination and the political change took place intermittently, not allowing any group to thrust its views on the society. This was the reason why there was no cult of "Founding Fathers" in the French Revolution. All the great heroes of the Revolution such as Mirabeau, Marat, Saint Just, Danton and Robespierre failed to consolidate their images. They were soon discredited after their failure. Most of them were executed by the revolutionary forces and condemned for betraying the revolution. The result is that all leaders of the French Revolution are treated as ordinary human beings by the historians and their weakness and mistakes are freely analysed.

On the contrary the American and Russian Revolutions are different. First, the American war of Independence is given the respectable name of the American Revolution, while as a matter of fact it was not a revolution as it did not change the basic structure of the society, it was a war of independence against colonialism. However, after the change of its nomenclature, the American revolution produced a cluster of the Founding Fathers, who soon became heroes in American

history. The proverty of the American history raised the status of these heroes and they became the pride of the nation.

Lenin, after the success of the Revolution, planned to erect the monuments of the revolutionary heroes, who were selected from different countries of Europe on the basis of their historical and political role, for the education and aspiration of the people. They included Marx, Engels, Lassalle, Radishchev, Herzen, Pervoskaya, Garibaldli, Robespierre, Danton and some progressive peots. Later on, the communist government made Lenin a demi-god after his death and put his embalmed body in a glass coffin for the view of people. The revolution further produced more heroes and undermined the role of the people.

In China, the revolution created a number of heroes, but the Cultural revolution of the 60s demolished the images of most of these heroes, even the stature of Mao was reduced drastically. The recent political changes have put most of them in oblivion.

The great change occurred after Perestroika and Glasnost, when the old regimes in Eastern Europe collapsed. The first expression of the wrath of the people was against the monuments and statues of the heroes, they were pulled down or disfigured; and only after the demolition of the images of the heroes, people assumed a position to assert their will to raise their voice and to form their own governments.

The whole drama in Eastern Europe provides a lesson to the students of history; how one revolution creates heroes and how the other demolishes their images and ironically creates its own heroes. Those societies who rely on heroes for their survival do not prosper; because it simply means distrust of the people.

HEROES AND DEMOCRACY

The great man in history, in order to achieve greatness, follows the path of wars and conquests. He abolishes the old order and lays down the foundation of a new system based on the ideals which he formulates in his mind. To fulfil his ambitions and to realise his dreams, he fights bloody battles and sacrifices people.

In making history, the great man, according to Hegal, refuses to allow moral values to influence his judgement. His actions are not controlled by morality; he is above it. "There are great man in history whose own individual purposes embrace the substantial element that is the will of the World Spirit. This is where their true power lies".

Being an instrument of the World Spirit, the great man places himself above all criticism and expects that people should follow him without any question and help him to fulfil his divine mission.

Analysing the factor of greatness of an individual in German society, Thomas Mann writes; In Germany, greatness inclines to an undemocratic process of hypertrophy; and between it and the masses there is a gulf, a "pathos of distance" to use Nietzsche's favourite saying "The concept of greatness in every society creates servitude on the one hand and an overgrowth of absolutistic egotism on the other".

The greatness of a hero is always built on the sacrifices of the people; people are considered raw material to be used and exploited and the tragedy is that the great hero never repents what he does to the people. On the contrary, he has contempt for them, because only then he can mercilessly sacrifice them for his purposes.

In order to use them, he makes them imbecile, docile, and obedient. Therefore, the myth of greatness creates servile worship of power and weakens the faith in noble human ideas and values. People are exhorted to sacrifice their lives to make a hero honourable; to abandon all comfort of life to give him glamour, to accept humiliation in order to make him powerful.

Thus, the myth of the greatness of an individual is anti-people, undemocratic, and promotes despotism and dictatorship. It saps the energies and creativeness of the people and prevents any popular movement from flourishing.

The worst aspect of hero worship is the complete reliance of the people on the miraculous power of a hero to rescue them from all crises. Once people surrender their powers to a hero, the hero reduces them to a state of helplessness and, in the name of greatness, humiliates them, despises them, and after their use, abandons them like garbage.

In Pakistan, it is in the psyche of the people to worship heroes. They have inherited this tendency from their past. Their whole history is the history of the achievements of great individuals. Even the history of Pakistan is interpreted in term of the role of the individuals. Therefore, the whole history is told in two sentences; Iqbal dreamt of Pakistan; and Muhammad Ali Jinnah made it. Nobody bothers to question as to where were the people? For whom was Pakistan created; for Iqbal, for Jinnah or for the people? It is also said that Pakistan is a divine gift; it means that no struggle was made to get it. The result is that this interpretation of history makes people dependent on miracles and on the hope to be delivered from above. They have developed passions for since Messiah to come and establish heaven on earth.

Whenever we face problems, instead of finding solutions, we pray to the Almighty to send a superman to solve our problems. It is quite common to hear such slogans as "We need another Salahuddin to fight against the Christians; another Muhammad bin Qasim or Mahmud of Ghazna to fight against the Hindus". The result is that the more we rely on the heroes, the more we weaken the process of democracy and pave the way for dictatorship.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A HERO

It is customary in our culture to exhort the young generation to follow in the footsteps of our ancestors. Any deviation from their teachings is regarded as open rebellion. This attitude fully reflects our abhorrence of change which deters the new generation from altering the old ways or innovating. It is an attempt to sustain the old order and to prevent any attempt to criticise or condemn it.

In an attempt to preserve the status quo, its beneficiaries take support of the personalities whose images are carved and mystified in order to persuade the people to flow their teachings for the benefit of the society and to accept their status in the hierarchical order without any question. Therefore, children must follow their parents and people their leaders. The net result of this blind following is obedience, submission, and docility among the masses.

Reverence of heroes is so deep-rooted in our society that our whole history is interpreted in terms of the achievements of "great individuals". It is adopted both by rightist and leftist groups who ask the people to follow their ideologies because some great man says or writes in their support. This approach is fully reflected in both wings as far as two of our great heroes are concerned, i.e., Iqbal and Jinnah. One is regarded as the thinker, the other as activist; one dreamt Pakistan and the other realised his dream. Thus both achieved the status of founding fathers of the new country, and to criticise them or to point out their weaknesses tantamounts to blasphemy.

For the last 44 years, the people of Pakistan are bewildered to hear the antithetical view of Iqbal and Jinnah. The rightist parties are projecting both of them as puritans and champions of religious ideologies. The PTV flashes the "golden sayings" of these leaders, advising the people to follow the path of Pakistan ideology. Pakistan, according to them, is created to implement the *shariat* with full force. On the other hand, leftists and progressives complain that actually both leaders belong to them and they are being cleverly hijacked by the other group; therefore, after owning them, they search out

those elements in their sayings and writings which support their views.

The result is that both groups heavily depend on the teachings, views, and ideas of these two great individuals and nobody makes any attempt to convince the people that their programme itself has a sound basis to lead the country towards progress. For example, whenever there is discussion on theocracy and secularism, it is said that Pakistan should be a secular country because Jinnah in his first speech at the Constituent Assembly unequivocally expressed this view. While the other group in its support presents a number of extracts from his speeches supporting the "two nation" theory.

The irony is that both groups regard people as passive and expect them to follow in the footsteps of their leaders without any question. If Jinnah orders them to become secular, the whole nation must follow it; if he asks them to become puritans and orthodox, again it is the duty of the masses to obey him. Our intellectuals, from the right or left, never try to argue that theocracy or secularism are good or bad as a system. The society does not become secular or theocratic because of an order from some individuals, it requires basic change in its structure and a change in thinking. Nobody analyses the systems of democracy, secularism, or liberalism. Why do we need them?

It is the responsibility of the progressive intellectuals that instead of relying on the great individuals they should argue the merits of democracy and secularism and convince the people that these systems would liberate them from bondage and provide them opportunities to participate in the affairs of the society. The most important thing is that it would liberate them from the clutches of the great heroes.

UNMAKING OF HEROES

The element of change is a characteristic of the Western civilisation which makes it dynamic and creative. The discipline of history is not stagnant in the West as new interpretations and concepts constantly recast and reshape the past. In the process of reinterpretation the heroes of the past are discredited and their high and holy images are demolished. It is an exciting experience to see a holy man being brought down to the stature of an ordinary person. It comes as a relief that wonders were achieved not by the extraordinary persons but by those who had all human weaknesses and yet they managed to accomplish what they set forth as their goal.

Recently in America and Europe a number of books are published which have brought down the erstwhile heroes to the level of ordinary men. They are Ignativs Loyala, Columbus, and Tito. The biography of Loyala is written by Philip Carman on the occasion of his 500th anniversary. Loyala was the founder of the counter reformation who effectively responded to the challenges of the Protestant movement and defended the Catholic Church. His *Society of Jesus* infused a new spirit in the orthodox Catholics. This made him a saint in the eyes of the Catholics. In the history books he appeared as a grim ascetic and a hammer for heretics. Carman's approach is that whatever that was achieved by Ignatius Loyala was not the result of his supernatural powers but the need of a segment of his society. He was not a saint but a human being who had all human weaknesses.

Likewise, Columbus has now become more controversial than any other hero in American history. His quincentennial observation to be held in 1992 has already become a point of discord. The Indians are ready to protest and dishonor the man who claimed to have discovered them from the unknown world. Historians are quarreling over such words as "discovery", "exploration", and arguing that people and countries were not discovered but colonised and conquered. They are trying to reinterpret Columbus' arrival in America in such a language as would not hurt the feelings of the Indians, the original inhabitants of America. Therefore, it is decided not to use the word `celebrate' and instead of it use `jubilee'

(which is a Jewish word for a time of remembrance when one can redress wrongs). Similarly, instead of `fighting' they are using the word `encounter'.

Kirkpatric Sale in his book, *The Conquest of Paradise: Charistopher Coloumbus and the Columbian Legacy* vehemently criticises Columbus and accuses him of being the first European who enslaved American inhabitants and destroyed 70 million human lives. "He was less mystic than a mad man, driven only by his craziness and cruelty. As a matter of fact, he initiated the genocide of Tainos, Aztecs and the Incas". However, Sale is not the first writer to topple down the image of Columbus by pointing out the horrors perpatrated by the Europeans on the locals. Dr Johnsons, writing in 1759 on the conquest of America had also condemned it.

"And indeed what but false hope, or resistless terror can prevail upon a weaker nation to invite a stronger into their country, to give their lands to strangers whom no affinity of manners, or similitude of opinion can be said to recommend, to permit them to build towns from which the natives are excluded, to raise fortresses by which they are intimidated, to settle themselves with such strength, that they cannot afterwards be expelled, but are for ever to remain the masters of the original inhabitants, the dictators of their conduct, and the arbiters of their fate. . . It cannot be said that the Indians originally invited us to their coasts: We went uncalled and unexpected to nations who had no imagination that the earth contained any inhabitants so distant and so different from themselves. We astonished them with our ships. . To this influence, and to this only, are to be attributed all the cessions and submissions of the Indian princes, if indeed any such cessions were ever made, of which we have no witness but those who claim them, and there is no great malignity in suspecting, that those who have robbed have also lied."

Similarly, Marshall Tito became a superman under political power. His high image was promoted by the official media. But after his death and political changes in Russia and Eastern Europe, his personality is also being judged anew. There are two books recently published on Tito. *Tito's Women* by Filip Radulovic and *Tito's Flawed Legacy* by Nora Beloff.

Both violate Yugoslavi's Federal law forbidding anything that defames Tito's memory or his work. These two books present another image of Tito: a sexual athlete, a tainted hero., who compromised with the Nazis; a coward shrinking in fear from the threat of an imagined Soviet invasion. On the discovery of Tito's new image a youngman's comment is very relevant: "For old people the book has come as a shock. But Young people think nothing of him. For them, he belongs to the past."

4

HISTORY OF SINDH

A COLONIAL INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

The history of Sindh, from the very beginning, has been interpreted from the colonial point of view. This interpretation not only damaged the historical truth but also prevented the dissemination of historical consciousness among the people of Sindh. This interpretation is rooted in the foreign domination and colonisation of Sindh. Arab rule affected the whole concept of the history of Sindh because after their conquest, the majority of the population was converted to Islam and, consequently, sympathised with the conqueors. This period is also significant because the written history of Sindh began with the advent of the Arabs, Arab historians naturally justified their invasion, conquest, and occupation. The later generations of the Muslim historians followed their point of view and, in the communal atmosphere of India, glorified Arab rule in Sindh.

This attitude proved harmful because the history of Sindh before the Arab invasion was neglected and fewer attempts were made to reconstruct its past. One of the reasons for neglecting history would be the lurking fear that it might reveal something more civilised, cultural, and glorious than what the new ruling elite brought with it. Thus, any work on the Indus

Valley civilisation is discouraged. It is this fear which prevented the excavation of ancient sites. The excavation of Brahmanabad, Mansurah is a typical example where more emphasis is laid on the excavation of the Muslim remains rather than the Rai and Brahman periods. This attitude blocked efforts to find missing links in the ancient culture and history of Sindh which could have enriched our historical knowledge.

This misinterpretation of history has put the Sindhi nation and people in an inferior position.

The second important phase misinterpreted in the history of Sindh is the Mughal conquest and rule. The Mughals ruled Sindh for a long time and treated it as a colony. There is no doubt that while some provinces benefited from the progressive policy of the Mughals, Sindh remained a neglected territory.

This neglect and apathy are fully reflected in the contemporary history of the Mughals where Sindh is treated most superficially. Historians have focused their attention on the Mughal rulers and mentioned Sindh here and there. This left the history of Sindh incomplete and inadequate. Modern historians, basing their research on contemporary Mughal sources, failed to consider, or even find out, the Sindhi point of view.

In the third phase the British interpretation dominated the history of Sindh. With the advent of British imperialism, the tactics and the methods of the colonial powers had become highly refined and sophisticated. To provide a moral basis for imperialist expansion and colonisation new theories and new ideas were created and new slogans were coined. Among these slogans was the theory, of the White Man's Burden. To strengthen this theory support was taken from history, politics, economics, and other fields of knowledge. The picture which was portrayed of a colonised country had a set pattern: that the native government was despotic, its economy was primitive, its agriculture was in ruins, its peace and order was disturbed, its art and literature were on decline, and that the native people were indolent, lazy, mean, barbarous, fanatic, and superstitious. This concept of the lazy native became central to the British imperialist theory. The civilised White Man had to

conquer native states in order to civilise them. Sindh, along with other parts of India, suffered from this treatment. The European travellers, envoy, and administrators, who visited Sindh before and after the conquest, spread these views among the English ruling classes. This, in turn, justified their occupation and rule in Sindh. The history of British rule in Sindh is, thus, based on this colonial interpretation. The biographies of the British conquerors, administrators and reformers, which appeared in abundance, glorified their historic role in Sindh. The impact of this interpretation of history in Sindh and other parts of the subcontinent was deep and put generation after generation of natives in a state of cultural poverty and intellectual inferiority.

After partition of the subcontinent it was expected to get rid of the colonial interpretation of history, but like other colonial institutions we inherited the distorted history of Sindh as it best served the new ruling classes' interests. The Sindhis are still regarded as lazy and indolent and incapable of assuming the responsibilities of government and administration. This again provides the ruling elite a self designed moral basis to rule over Sindh and civilise the Sindhi society.

Unfortunately the historians of Sindh also failed to interpret their history of Sindh. No attempt was made to undertake the task of rewriting the history of Sindh. Modern historians of Sindh usually followed a narrow nationalist point of view and tried to replace it for colonial interpretation, but the limited vision of history failed to create any positive historical consciousness among the people.

It is a dilemma of the modern historians of Sindh whether to write the history from a religious or a nationalist point of view. Both views lead to a narrow interpretation of history. Correct interpretation will be possible only if the masses are given their right place in history. This is the only way to stimulate interest in history and create historical consciousness which will lead to the path of freedom and liberty. Throughout history, the ruling classes of Sindh remained aloof and unsympathetic towards the masses. It made the masses vulnerable and weak, and they succumbed to foreign

domination, it is the lesson of history that only with the help of conscious masses can the struggle for freedom be won.

THE MASSES POINT OF VIEW

The recent historiography of Sindh fully reflects the sense of deprivation and the feelings of nationalism. The past history is written to express the grievances of the present. The typical example is the introduction of the *Tarikh-i-Mazhar Shahjahan* by Husamud-din Rashid, who edited and published the Persian text of the book. The author of the book, Yusuf Mirak, was a Mughal noble, who had some differences with the Mughal governor of Sahwan and prepared a document of his political crimes. He described in detail the methods of torture which were adopted by the governor and how the peasants and traders suffered at his hand.

The book could not be presented to Shahjahan and was lost. It was discovered after the partition of the subcontinent. Rashidi used the book for his own purpose and highlighted those portions of the book which exposed the inhuman attitude of the Mughal administration, thus conveying the message that Sindh suffered similarly at the hands of the new administration after the partition as it suffered under the Mughals. Through past history he expressed the sense of deprivation among the upper classes of Sindh who were neglected by the ruling classes of Pakistan.

The exponents of the sense of deprivation are the feudal lords and the upper classes of Sindh, who accuse the ruling classes of the Punjab of usurping their rights. Thus, the conflict is between the ruling classes of the Punjab and Sindh. The peasants, workers, and the lower classes, who have sense of deprivation throughout the country, are totally ignored. Sindhi feudals are treating their peasants even worse than they are treated by their counterparts in the Punjab. Nobody thought the sense of deprivation of those people groaning under the feudal system for centuries. To the Sindhi feudals, it is great injustice to deprive them of political power, but to snatch everything from the peasantry and keep the workers as slaves does not bother their conscience.

Recently, one of the leading feudal-cum-spiritual leaders of Sindh demanded that all agricultural lands in Sindh which were granted to the army officers and bureaucrats should be

distributed among the peasants. But the question is why only the lands of army officers and bureaucrats? Why not the lands of feudal lords who got them as a result of their collaboration with the past ruling dynasties. The origin of the grant of *Jagirs* is the same, whether by the Government of Pakistan or by the Mughals and Kalhoras. The peasants, who cultivate the land, have the right to occupy all lands whether of army officers or feudals. The common people are deprived and oppressed. Unless their deprivation is eliminated, Sindh would remain poor and backward. Sindh belongs to the people and not only to the feudals.

Another trend in the historiography of Sindh is nationalism. The history which is written with a national point of view glorifies past ruling dynasties of Sindh and attributes all works of public welfare to them. This interpretation suits the present ruling classes because some of them belong to the old ruling dynasties. If the period of the Talpur rulers was a blessing to Sindh, it projects the members of the family as heroes, and by virtue of being Talpur, the family takes active part in public affairs and dominates the political scene.

This prevents an objective analysis of the Talpur rulers, who, after assuming power, divided Sindh into three principalities: Hyderabad, Mirpur, and Khairpur. Sindh was politically weakened as a result of this division and was easily conquered by the Britishers. Moreover, during the Talpur period all the fertile land was granted to the Balochs as *jagirs* (These families are still occupying those *jagirs*). As the Talpur Mirs were fond of hunting, the best agricultural lands were reserved for their hunting grounds which greatly reduced the agricultural products. No attention was paid either to education or public welfare. An objective analysis will demolish the image of the Talpurs and expose the misdeeds of their rule.

Most of the ruling dynasties of Sindh were foreign, either they came from Central Asia or India. After assuming the power, they sought collaboration from the feudal classes and selected those who cooperated with them, the rest were pushed in the background. This repeated process put the original Sindhis aside and all the high posts were given to the Arabs, Persians, Mughals and Balochs. The present ruling classes of

Sindh are from the above families who ruled Sindh in the past. They still have the political power and material resources to rule Sindh.

Another class which remained very influential in Sindh throughout its history is the Sayyids. They were not only respected but granted *jagirs* and stipends from the rulers. Even today the Sayyids are strong and dominate the politics of Sindh. An objective study of their anti-masses and racist attitude is needed to weaken their hold. The nationalist interpretation supports the upper classes and protects their status and privileges. It conceals their weaknesses and makes them heroes. It ignores the suffering of the masses in order not to accuse the rulers. It reflects only an image of the elite and neglects the role of the masses. Therefore, it is time to write the history with masses' point of view and expose the anti-people role of the feudals of Sindh. This is the only interpretation which helps the people to fight for their rights.

SHOULD SINDH'S HISTORY BE REWRITTEN?

After the British conquest of Sindh in 1843, British conquerers became interested in probing into the history of this region in order to understand the country and its people.

There emerged two schools of thought: one tried to prove that the history of Sindh was of no importance, while the other emphasised past glory. The second group was strengthened after the discovery of Meonjodaro, which proved that Sindh had an advanced civilisation which played a significant role in shaping its history.

The challenge to reconstruct this history was taken up by young educated Sindhis, mostly Hindus and Parsis. They started to rebuild the past with vigour and enthusiasm until the British officers and bureaucrats who resided in Sindh began to write history from an imperialist point of view.

After the partition of the subcontinent, two antithetical groups among historians came into existence: the Islamic and the nationalist. The Islamic group begins with the advent of the Arabs and gives importance to the role of Islam in Sindh. For them the history of Sindh before the Arab conquest was a dark period. The other group, with a spirit of nationalism, opposes this thesis, and traces roots in the ancient culture of Sindh. They believe in the continuity of history and thus, oppose any division of it into compartments such as Hindus, Muslim or British periods.

The issue of Muhammad Bin Qasim and Raja Dahar was the starting point where these two groups came into conflict. From the point of view of the Islamic group of historians, Muhammad Bin Qasim was the saviour of Sindh, while the nationalist group labelled him an invader and glorified Raja Dahar who sacrificed his life for his country. This controversy, however, added a new dimension to Sindh's history before the Arab conquest and examined the economic, political and social consequences of the Arab occupation. Whether Sindh suffered or gained is the task of historians to determine on solid historical evidence.

A considerable part of the history of Sindh has already been reconstructed from both angles, but much remains to be done. After partition, there is a need to undertake work in the light of new socio-economic and political changes which have taken place in this region. It is a great challenge to the young generation of historians to rewrite and reinterpret it.

It should be noted that the model of historical writings which is before them is not very authentic. For example Richard Burton called Sindh "the unhappy valley". This concept of unhappiness influenced most historians, who interpreted history as a long chain of foreign oppression. The indirect conclusion of this interpretation is that Sindhis were always oppressed and no attempt was made by them to challenge the oppressor. They were fatalic and recognised every invader as their legitimate ruler never offering any resistance to tyrannical rule.

If we make a thorough study, we find a number of examples of the people's revolts which were dismissed by our conventional historians as petty disturbances.

It is the responsibility of our young historians to trace these rebellions, investigate their background and throw light on the struggle between the ruling classes and the masses. Historical evidence will prove that the people of Sindh were not passive and irresolute, they never recognised oppressive authority without challenge. It is the task of modern historians to rehabilitate these unknown heroes who fought bravely and sacrificed their lives for a cause.

Similarly, a thorough study is needed to understand the relationship between the ruling classes and the local people. The foreign dynasties expected blind obedience to their authority and whenever a sign of disobedience was observed, it was crushed with an iron hand. On the other hand, it is also a bitter fact that the people of Sindh fared badly even when the rulers came from their own land.

The relationship between the ruling and the ruled can be understood by one example. During the time of Mahmud of

Ghazna, the city of Balkh was attacked by the Qarakhanid General, the enemy of Mahmud. The people of Balkh defended themselves against the invader. As a result, the city and some of its buildings were damaged. When Mahmud captured the city he called the citizens and reprimanded them for defending the city. He told them that they had no right to resist the enemy and so place their own property in jeopardy, subjects must resign themselves to whichever ruler showed himself to be the strongest.

Thus, the methods of all ruling classes - whether foreigners or local - were the same to rule people by force and to receive taxes by setting up administrative machinery. The people of Sindh suffered the payment of taxes but no attempt was made by any ruling dynasty to raise their social status. The king, nobility, and clergy formed a strong unit to exploit them. They controlled the means of production by occupying agricultural lands and used surplus income to strengthen their power.

Another significant period of Sindh's history is the British rule. A study of this period is revealing. Though the rule was essentially alien, more work for public well being was done by the British than by our own rulers. More schools, colleges, roads, bridges, and public utility buildings were built. Sindh entered the modern era during this period.

In writing contemporary history, more importance is given to personalities than to people. Tyrannical rulers are euologised and those who sacrificed the interest of the people to save their own interests are called freedom fighters.

The role of the masses should be emphasised in every period of history. This could be done through analysing the sharp differences between the ruling classes and the masses. How the monarchy and the nobility built administrative institutions to control the masses and snatched all their earnings and wealth from them. It was this surplus income which helped the ruling classes to build their palaces and forts, to keep a large number of royal family members and to patronise the flatterers. By keeping surveillance over all means of production, they used the masses for their own interest. For

example, they employed them as soldiers and sacrificed them in their private wars either to extend their dominions or to acquire more power.

Besides political history, the social and economic aspects of each period should be analysed. A thorough study of these would reveal the antimasses attitude of the ruling classes: how little was spent on education and on social welfare, and how much was spent on self-aggrandisement.

The role of the feudal lords should also be studied with the changing ruling dynasties - how swiftly they changed loyalties and made the task of every ruling dynasty easier in order to retain their privileges.

Emphasis should be placed on cultural history. Village life, tribal structure, manners and customs of the people, their music, dance, dresses and eating and drinking habits should be thoroughly studied.

But in doing so, one should keep in mind that history should never be used to extol the tyrants, oppressors, and exploiters. It is the responsibility of historians to expose their crimes. They should not go unpunished in history. It is time the masses to give their rightful place, because they are the truly dynamic force of history.

THE ARABS CONQUEST OF SINDH

(a) Broadening the vision of history.

There were no traditions of historiography in the Indian subcontinent before the arrival of Muslims. The conquest of Sindh by Muhammad Bin Qasim in 712 AD not only established the rule of the Umayyid and Sindh became a province of the Arab Empire, but it began the tradition of writing of history in India. However, the characteristic of this historiography is that the Arab historians, writing on the conquest of Sindh, present the account with the Arab point of view, and thus narrow down the vision of history. The first detailed history on the conquest of Sindh is the *Chuchnama* or *Fathnama* by some anonymous writer. It was translated in Persian by Ali Kufi during the reign of Nasiruddin Qubacha (1206-1228). Ali Kufi claimed that he found the Arabic manuscript in the possession of some family and in view of its importance, decided to translate in into Persian. As no other copy of the manuscript is found, it is difficult to say whether that book was a contemporary source or was written by Ali Kufi and to give it credibility, he declared it a contemporary Arabic manuscript.

As the Arabic manuscript is not available, it is again difficult to say how far it is a translation and how far the translator added his own version and distorted the facts. Apart from these weaknesses, the *Chuchnama* is not an authentic history book, besides historical account, there are such stories and legends which are unhistorical and were added just to make the narrative spicy. Whatever information is given about the Rai and the Brahman dynasties is not reliable because the author does not quote any source of his information.

Now the question is why Ali Kufi decided to translate or write a history on the conquest of Sindh under the reign of Qubacha? A minute study of the *Chuchnama* reveals the motives of Ali Kufi. In the Chuchnama the authority of the Caliph is strongly asserted and the provincial governors are advised to be loyal to the center. During Ali Kufi's time, after

the death of Muhammad Ghori (d.1206), there was a struggle for power among his slaves. Sultan Iltutmish (d. 1236), who ruled over north India, was considered the legitimate successors of the Ghori; and it was in the interests of the Muslim community of the subcontinent to be loyal to the center and discourage all such attempts which would weaken it. Qubacha, after assuming the title of the Sultan, was busy conquering Sindh and Punjab and consolidating his power. As a result there were clashes with Iltutmish. The Muslim elite of that period regarded these clashes against the interest of the Muslims; therefore, their sympathies were with Iltutmish and not with Qubacha.

Ali Kufi, by writing the Chachnama, gave a message to Qubacha that only a strong center would protect the Muslim community, and therefore he should desist from any attempt to be independent. The parallel between Muhammad Bin Qasim and Qubacha can be analysed. Both conquered Sindh easily and established their rule. Both possessed strong armies and were in a position to challenge the central authority, but the approaches of both persons differed, and inspite of different outlooks, both faced the same fate. Muhammad Bin Qasim submitted before the authority of the Caliph and surrendered his power. He was imprisoned and died helplessly in prison, but the domination of the Arabs over Sindh remained intact. Qubacha asserted his independence and fought a number of battles to preserve his rule, but in the end he was defeated and drowned in the Indus. After his death, his kingdom was incorporated in the Delhi Saltanate; and by eliminating the strong rivals Iltutmish became a strong ruler.

Besides pleading for a strong center and loyalty to the central leadership; the *Chuchnama* presents the victor's point of view in which Muhammad Bin Qasim emerges as hero while his rival Raja Dahar is portrayed as a rival. It also justifies the Arab aggression on moral grounds. In the absence of any other contemporary source, the point of view of the *Chuchnama* prevails over the modern historians who, without analysing it, accept its version of the Arab conquest and completely ignore the outlook of the Sindhi ruler and his party.

Another contemporary source about the conquest of Sindh is al-Baladhuri's *Futuh - al- Buldan* which fully justified the Arab conquest because in his opinion, the ruler of Sindh, without any provocation, captured Muslim women and children, thus invited the Arabs to attack.

After Muhammad Bin Qasim Sindh was ruled by the governors appointed by the Umayyid and the Abbasid Caliphs. When the Abbasid Caliphate declined, it was ruled by the independent Arab kingdoms. The source material on these two periods are based on the writings of the Arab historians or the Arab travellers. Most of the observations of these travellers are usually superficial. For example, after observing the abundance of commodities in the market, they concluded that the society was prosperous not realizing that how many people had capacity to purchase. Moreover, the travellers only visited cities and had no idea of the poverty of the villages, therefore, they portrayed a glamorous picture of city life. Modern historians, using this material without analysing it, proved that Sindh under Arab rule was prosperous and enjoyed peace and security.

There are some books written in Urdu and Sindhi on the history of Sindh. The first urdu book was written by Abdul Halim Sharar. It was further improved by Abu Zafar Nadwi. In both of these books the events are simply narrated without any criticism or analysis. In Sindhi, there is a book written by Maulai Shaidai *"Jannat - al-Sindh"* which follows the same Urdu books pattern. The approach of all these books is to justify the Arab conquest by condemning Raja Dahar, criticising his rule, and glorifying the Arab period. The victory of the Arabs silenced all supporters of the vanquished Sindhi rulers. Recently under the Sindhi nationalism Raja Dahar emerged as a hero, but his hero worship is purely based on emotions, no historical justification is provided to justify his case.

(b) Do two wrongs make a right?

The Arab conquests may be divided into two periods; the first, when they defeated the Byzantinian and Persian Empires and occupied their kingdoms; the second when the Byzantinian

and Persian civilisations along with their political and administrative set up integrated with the Arab system and the occupation of rich and fertile lands enhanced the financial resources of the Arabs making them capable to keep a large army and produce abundant weapons to fight more wars. The academic and philosophical traditions of the defeated nations enriched them culturally and made them sophisticated to negotiate and deal with other nations. The conquests further increased the numerical strength of the Arabs because the majority of the defeated people converted to Islam and joined the army in the hope to get a share from the war booty. Once the war machine moved, it became difficult to stop it because after the conquest of the new areas, not only the boundaries of the Arab kingdom were extended but it brought war booty which contributed richness to the state treasury as well as to the society in general.

Constant fighting between different nations and peoples, not only improved their weapons but ensured they excelled in the art of war. The successes in the battle fields increased the thrist to conquer more countries. Therefore different pretexts were invented to invade neighbouring countries. The moral justification for aggression was required to inspire the soldiers to fight a battle for a higher cause. Sometimes it was assumed that the neighboring country intended to attack, therefore, the best policy was to invade and crush its power before it could carry out its plan. In modern terminology this is called "The Forward Policy."

Most of the contemporary histories justified the Arab conquests on moral grounds and accused the defeated powers of violating established rules and regulations. These histories were written on a pattern in order to prove that the Arab conquerors did nothing wrong but .followed just principles to execute the will of God. For example, in the first place, the historians portrayed a very depressing picture of society, saying for example: there was no law and order, the administration was coercive, the life and property of the people was not safe, the ruling classes were corrupt and inept, the people were persecuted and exploited, in brief there was moral degradation in the whole society. Therefore, the Arabs, who regarded themselves as just, righteous, and upholders of truth,

had a right to liberate the people from the clutches of the despotic rulers and provide them a descent life.

Usually, to invade a country the pretexts given were to provide the refuge for the Muslims rebels: to persecute their Muslim subject; to help the enemy, and to have hostile attitude towards them. In some cases, it was said that the people sought their help to get rid of their despotic rulers. Once the aggression found some moral ground, in this case to invade a country, to occupy it, to plunder it, to kill the people as enemy, to capture the women and children as slaves, and to possess their land, all such acts were justified and there remained no qualm of conscience in treating vanquished people badly. After victory in the battlefield, the conquerors required people who would help them to administer the country, therefore, those who collaborated with them, were treated generously and high rewards were bestowed upon them; but those who resisted their occupation, were regarded the worst enemies, and were harshly handled; after the failure of resistance, they were executed, their properties were confiscated; and their women and children were enslaved. This harsh treatment usually silenced all opposition and people recognised their rule.

As soon as the country was occupied and their rule was consolidated, contemporary historians declared a remarkable change in the affairs of the country. Political anarchy came to an end, law and order was established, people got their lost rights, the policy of religious tolerance was inaugurated, and the state provided protection against injustices and of all kinds of evils. It was assumed that every Arab conquest was welcomed by the oppressed people who felt belived when the old tyrannical rule came to an end. The result of these conquests, as most of the contemporary and the modern historians assume, was the general well being of the people and the cultural, social, and economic progress of society. The Arab historians, by justifying Arab Imperialism as liberal, enlightened, and tolerant, present only a partial point of view neglecting the sentiments of the vanquished people.

(c) And the poets too!

One of the characteristics of imperialism is to glorify the war heroes in order to encourage and inspire others to sacrifice their lives for a higher and just cause and to get a dignified place in history. The *Chuchnama* in this respect truly represents the spirit of the Arab Imperialism. The description of the battlefield, the war strategies, courage and bravery of the Arab soldiers are narrated vividly. Those individuals who emerged as heroes or martyrs, as a result of these wars, were praised profusely by the poets. In the *Chuchnama* there are a number of couplets which were composed by the famous poets in memory of those generals and soldiers who foughts bravely and helped the Arab army to win the battle. For example, there are two couplets in praise of two soldiers who died fighting against the enemy.

Yasir ground the army to dust under his mare's hoofs.

He cut them down the more, the more they multiplied.

His mare, how loyal - how warlike - how fleet was she!

In another couplet the poet says:

Inform the high and low among the children of Rabiah.

We found the mailed cavalier on a dread charger in a hand to hand tussel, doing deeds of daring.

The poets, along with the historians, played significant role in strengthening the imperialism by composing inspiring verses after victory, those who died in fighting were immortalised by the elegies written on their death. Thus, every war produced a number of heroes and martyres to provide pride to the society.

As the Arabs believed that they were fighting for a higher cause, they expected the spiritual powers to help them in defeating the enemies. Thus, there are a number of examples in which it is proved that the Arab armies were rescued from

troubles by the grace of God. If the army faced the problem of scarcity of water, there was rain; if they lost their way, somebody came to lead in the right direction; or if the enemy made an attempt to attack in the night, it failed and the enemy suffered heavily by some calamity. By writing these incidents, the historians proved that divine blessing was on their side.

As the battles were fought between two armies, the majority of people remained unconcerned of the wars. In the cities, the merchants and the artisans preferred peace rather than war. The same was the case of the peasants who abhorred war because, as a result of wars, their crops were damaged and their grain stores were looted. The general public was affected after the war when the victorious forces plundered the cities and villages, raped the women, and enslaved the captured prisoners. As the general population suffered immensely, they made efforts to end the war quickly, therefore, they made peace with the victorious army and assured the new rulers for their loyalty.

In Sindh, the reasons for the success of the Arab army was its superiority of weapons and the experience in new war technology. On the retreat of Sindhi armies, the Arabs, after occupying the forts and cities consolidated their power and won the loyalty of the people. Abandoned by their own rulers, the people submitted to the conquerors and made peace with them.

In the success of the Arabs, the disintegrated Sindhi society also greatly contributed. The zamindars and the elite class of Sindh helped the victorious Arab army in order to preserve their properties and privileges; and as a result there emerged a group of "collaboraters" who guided the Arab armies in the right direction, provided all kinds of information; supplied them food and weapons; and leaked the secrets of Dahar's armies. The best example is of the Brahman who told the Arab general to demolish the temple where the flag was hoisted because the people of Daybal believed that they could not be defeated unless the flag remained intact.

Whenever, a tribal leader or a chief decided to collaborate with the Arabs, he tried to find some pretext in order to justify

his betrayal. Therefore, the arguments which were offered for their support to the Arabs were that in their old sacred books it was predicted that the Arabs would occupy the country. As the victory of the Arabs became inevitable, it was in the interest of the people of Sindh to cooperate with the invaders. Those who predicted the Arab victory were the Brahmans, who by their predictions, provided excuses to the chiefs and zamindars to join the Arabs forces and retain their high position among their people. This argument usually convinced people to accept the changing side of their leaders. For example, Ka ka, the chief of the *Budhya*, told his tribe that the Budhist books and the knowledge of astrology made a forecast that the conquest of the Arabs over this country was imminent. Another leader Moka B. Wasayo also referred to the prediction of the Arab victory by astrology. When he decided to join the Arabs, he requested Muhammad B. Qasim to imprison him by a trick so that he might retain his integrity. His argument was:

"If I surrender to you voluntarily without any show of fighting or opposing, my enemies will reproach me for it and I shall thereby bring my noble family into disgrace. Now I am going to Sakra on the pretext of celebrating the marriage of my daughter. General Muhammad Kasim (may his honours be permanent) may order about 1,000 horsemen to march and stand on such and such a road, and when I pass by that place they should come and capture me, and bring me to his presence. In that way I shall be free from any blame or reproach. Then people will not say that I became a renegade, and Dahar will not suspect any foul play. He will believe that I have been dragged away by force and violence."

As the Arabs needed help and cooperation of the chiefs to consolidate their power in the occupied areas, they offered high rewards and respect to these chiefs. On their arrival, they were alloted dignified places in the presence of the Arab Commander and the silken dress was given to them in appreciation of their services. The respect and reward allured most of the Sindhi chiefs to cooperate and join the Arab conquerors.

Thus, one of the factors which facilitated the Arab conquest of Sindh was the collaboration of the Sindhi Chiefs and Zamindars.

(d) Ours is not to question why

The Arab historians, in determining the causes of the invasion to Sindh, relate an accident, which in their opinion, provoked the Arabs to invade and conquer Sindh. It is said that some of the Arab women and children were going back to their homeland along with gifts from the ruler of Sri Lanka; when their ship reached Daybal, the sea pirates who were patronised by the rulers of Sindh, captured the ship; imprisoned women and children, and looted the property. When the prisoners were taken away to the fort, a girl, addressing Hajjaj, the governor of Basra, cried for help. When this moving scene was reported to Hajjaj, he was enraged and vowed to take revenge of this insult.

This story was accepted by most of the Muslim historians without any analysis because it provides justification for the Arab invasion, but a minute analysis of the story reveals many weaknesses: for example, when all the inmates of the ship were captured who told the story to Hajjaj; supposing that some one escaped from his captors, then how he reached Basra so quickly and reported everything; keeping in mind the modes of travelling in those days his journey must have taken him a long time to reach his destination. Assuming that Hajjaj was informed about this incident, could he take such an important decision to invade a country and take an immense risk just for the sake of a few women and children. Hajjaj was a shrewd politician and never were his decisions based on pure emotions. He always decided after carefully weighing the pros and cons. To him the lives of few people had no importance. He had put to death hundreds of people without any compunction and imprisoned hundreds of his opponents without any care, so his decision to invade Sindh was not to help the helpless women and children but to get political and economic benefits. However, it is possible that he might have taken advantage of the incident to accomplish his political motives in order to exploit the sentiments of the people and persuade them to become recruits in the army.

The conquest of Sindh was not a solitary incident, but a continuation of the Ummayyid imperialism. Hajjaj who was

the governor of the Eastern parts of the caliphate, made efforts to expand the territories and supervised all campaigns which his nominated generals launched in different directions of Central Asia. He believed that the Arabs should conquer all those countries where their armies could march. To make the Ummayyid caliphate strong and powerful was the motive of Hajjaj.

Besides political reasons, there were also commercial interest of the Arab traders to conquer Sindh in order to get safe passage free from the sea pirates; because the Arab merchants travelled from Arabia to the coastal towns of South India and visited the other countries situated around the Indian ocean. They had their settlements in South India and Sri Lanka. The sea pirates in the Indian occean occasionally plundered their rich commodities. There is also the influence of the ruler of Sindh, therefore, keeping the intere t of the merchants, Hajjaj asked Raja Dahar to keep the pir ates under control. Raja Dahar denied to having any influence over the pirates. This made Hajjaj determined to invade Sindh and to control the important port Daybal in the interest of the Arab merchants in order to provide them safe passage.

Later on the Muslim historians of Indian tried to find more reasons to justify the Arab invasion. For example, another incident, which provoked the Arabs was giving shelter to some Arab rebels who escaped from the Ummayyid territory after rebellion. Besides these, the Muslim historians after making great efforts, found more reasons such as the ruler of Sindh helped the Iranians against the Arabs and provided shelter to those Zoroastrians who fled from Iran after the Arab occupation and planning to overthrow the Arab government from their base in Sindh. They also blamed the Sindh's involvement in the rebellion which occurred in Makran against the Arabs. These reasons, in their opinion, were sufficient enough to attack Sindh and to occupy it in the name of justice.

(e) Counting the cost

On the basis of available historical evidence, it is assumed that the Arab invasion of Sindh was not the result of the incident of imprisonment of the Arab women and children but a

continuation of a policy to expand the Arab Empire. As a matter of fact, the plan to conquer Sindh was made just after the conquest of Syria and Iraq and during the caliphate of Umar (634-644) when one Arab general, Mughira attacked Daybal, the sea port of Sindh, without any success. During the period of Uthman (644-656) Hakam B. Jablah reached the eastern part of Sindh and reported to the Caliph: "Its water is dark any dirty, its fruit is bitter and poisonous; its land is stony, and its earth is saltish. A small army will soon be annihilated there, and a large army will soon die of hunger". This description deterred the Arabs from conquering Sindh. According to the report, Sindh did not appear the prosperous and wealthy country they had been led to believe; it was but a land of poor resources. They felt there was no use in conquering such a country, taking the risk of spending huge amounts on the offensive without ever hoping to get any profit. However, the Arab armies continued to fight against the turbulent tribes of Makran and as the Arab armies failed to crush them, they could not think it adviseable to march forward towards Sindh leaving the hinterland unoccupied.

During the Umayyid period, the Arab armies fought a number of battles in Makran, Kabul, and Qandher against the tribes and finally during the time of Walid (705-715), they suppressed their power and consolidated their hold over these territories. The occupation of Makran made the land route safe for the Arab armies to invade Sindh. Hajjaj, who successfully launched various campaigns against the rulers of the Central Asia, made a plan to conquer Sindh which remained unmaterialised since the days of the Orthodox caliphate. Now, it was possible to send strong army by land route as well as by sea. As the power of the Ummayyid caliphate was at its height and it had enough resources to support a costly campaign, therefore, to recruit a large army and equip it with the best weapons, he required the sanction of the Caliph. The correspondence between the Caliph and Hajjaj revealed the true nature of the campaign and it appeared clearly that the campaign was not launched because of the cry of the helpless girl but because of the political and financial gains that were to be wrought from it. When Hajjaj requested the Caliph for permission to invade Sindh, the Caliph wrote him the following missive:

"The people (of that country) are cunning and the country itself is very distant. It will cost us very large sums of money to provide a sufficient number of men and arms and instruments of war, and will require unusual skill and might to carry on the war, not to mention enormous provisions, for every time the army goes (on such an expedition) (vast) number of Mussalmans are killed".

Hajjaj in reply to this letter wrote to the Caliph:

"As for the distance of the country, and the cost of the expenditure. . . we have men and arms and instruments of war, and other things all ready at hand; nothing more is required. I undertake (God willing) to pay back into the royal treasury (may God make it last long) double the amount spent on provisions and other items of expenditure for the army here.

This made it clear that the real motive for sending the Arab army to conquer Sindh was not the release of the prisoners but to capture and exploit the resources of the conquered country. The Caliph agreed only when Hajjaj assured him he would pay double the amount spent on the expedition. Thus, the expedition in this way, became a commercial and financial venture; and determined its motive to loot and plunder as much as possible to pay for the expenses to the state treasury. However, in this respect, the conquest of Sindh is not the exception because all such wars in the past, were fought for the wealth and for the exploitation of the resources of the defeated country. As far as morality is concerned, it has no place in history.

(f) Keeping it in the family

Hajjaj appointed Mohammad bin Qasim, his nephew, as the commander in chief of the expedition to Sindh. He was sent to Shiraz to acquire practical knowledge in the art of warfare. However, there is no such evidence that he had shown any exceptional qualities as a soldier in Iran. Therefore, the appointment of such an inexperienced person to such an important expedition, and in the presence of experienced and

seasoned generals, based on the considerations of his relations and the tribal linkage to Hajjaj. The ulterior motive of Hajjaj, most probably, was to control the whole expedition personally and in this case only a young and inexperienced person could be depended on to completely obey his instructions. Moreover, he wanted to groom Muhammad bin Qasim, who was his relative, and to strengthen the influence of his family and the tribe. Usually such expeditions, if victorious brought home a huge war booty. Hajjaj wanted to keep the distribution of this loot in his own hands. These considerations, therefore, prompted him to assign the campaign to a person he could trust and Muhammad bin Qasim was fit to be appointed to this post.

However, considering his youth and lack of experience, Hajjaj selected a team of capable generals and soldiers to assist Muhammad bin Qasim. He strictly forbade Muhammad bin Qasim not to take any action without consulting them. Not satisfied with these arrangements, he organised a very efficient system of communication in order to supervise the whole expedition. It is said that such was the postal system that a letter took three days to reach from Basrah to Sindh. The result was that Hajjaj's presence was felt in the army camp and no action was taken without his instructions.

To ensure the success of the campaign, Hajjaj organised the army and personally selected all commanders and soldiers and instructed them in their duties. He provided the army with the best available weapons such as catapults, axes, bows and arrows, swords, and coats of arms. Against the attack of elephants he had large masks of lions made that would terrorise the elephants and make them ineffective on the battlefield.

To make travel easier Hajjaj arranged three thousand loading and six thousands ordinary camels. He particularly took care of the supply of food provisions. When he received news that the soldiers complained that the camp food tasted an ful he arranged for vinegar to be soaked in dry cotton and then ordered that the cotton be put in water to give out vinegar. He supervised everything and did not even forget to send needle and thread.

As soon as the army marched towards Sindh, Hajjaj started sending exhaustive instructions to prevent the young commander from committing any mistakes. The *Chuchnama* gives the whole correspondence and the contents of the letters exchanged between the two. On the basis of this evidence it can be safely concluded that the success of Sindh's expedition wholly depended on the instructions and strategies adopted by Hajjaj and not on the leadership of Muhammad bin Qasim, who did not take any independent action or decision but simply executed the policy of Hajjaj. For example, after the departure of the army Hajjaj wrote: "When you arrive at stages, within the limits of Sindh, and come within sight of Dybel, be very careful how you enter the place. When you arrive at Nerun, dig a ditch round your camp, that it may give you protection and safety."

When Muhammad bin Qasim besieged Dybal, Hajjaj instructed him: "When you face the enemy, be silent, do not engage in (pitched) battle, till I send orders to that effect. You will be constantly hearing from me, and you must make it a point to follow literally the instructions I may give you, and the plan I may suggest".

During the siege when Jauba, the engineer, who operated the big catapult "The Bride", asked Muhammad bin Qasim to remove two ram rods, he hesitated to take a decision by himself and wrote to Hajjaj asking for instruction, and after getting his permission, asked Jauba to make the necessary changes. Hajjaj further instructed him: "See that you have the sun behind your backs, as its glare will (then) not prevent you from having a full view of the enemy". The dependency of Muhammad bin Qasim is indicated by his not taking any decision regarding the prisoners who were captured after the occupation of Dybel because he had not been given any instructions by Hajjaj to this effect. When the news of the conquest of Dybel reached Hajjaj he wrote: "Let the booty be utilised for the necessary expenditure of the army, let them (soldiers) eat and drink as much as is good for them. . . Exert yourself to the utmost to supply provisions in abundance.... when you have conquered the country and strengthened the forts, endeavour to console the subjects and to sooth the residents, so that the agricultural classes and artisans and

merchants.... become comfortable and happy, and the country may become fertile and populous."

When Muhammad bin Qasim marched against Raja Dahar, Hajjaj kept himself informed of everything and continued to instruct him how to fight the battle and how to deal with the army of Dahar. He even pointed out to him what stategy should be adopted and how to cross the river. He wrote: "When you wish to cross the river, first examine carefully the crossing places on the bank, secure such places on the other streams and lakes (also)". When Muhammad bin Qasim put the crossing of the river off and wasted his time in waiting, Hajjaj reproached him and wrote: "It is such a long time since you have been sitting in one place just opposite your enemy.... I cannot be but surprised at the weakness and indiscreetness of your policy.... (people) will attribute your present stance to lethargy and want of judgement". He advised him to cross the river carefully. He even instructed him how to deal with the native people: "I am dissatisfied with you and am surprised at your lenient policy.... you should exercise proper discretion and discrimination and should not consider high and low equal or on the same footing". Hajjaj was worried that a prolonged war would be expensive, therefore he asked him to take quick action and finish the business as quickly as possible. After the defeat of Dahar, when Muhammad bin Qasim started to pardon everyone, Hajjaj reprimanded him by writing: "The way of granting pardon prescribed by the law is different from the one adopted by you, for you go on giving pardon to everybody, high or low, without any discretion." After the conquest of Sindh, the decision to impose Poll tax (*Jizya)* and to allow people full religious freedom was taken after consultation with Hajjaj, who in one of his letters outlined the policy" "After they have become Zimmis (protected subjects) we have no right to interfere with their lives or their property .... No one is prohibited from or punished for following his own religion.... They may live happy in their own homes."

Muhammad bin Qasim achieved brilliant success in the battlefield and tactfully handled all the affairs only because Hajjaj guided him on all matters: military and civilian. He supervised the movement of the army from his Basra headquarters and checked and corrected the young commander

whenever some wrong action was taken by him. On the basis of evidence in the Chachnama, Hajjaj emerges as the real conqueror of Sindh, while Muhammad bin Qasim proves to be just a puppet who executed his plans faithfully. This point of view is further strengthened when Hajjaj died in 714 and with his death, Muhammad bin Qasim lost not only a patron but a guide and advisor who directed him throughout the campaign. The result was that he did not produce any commendable work after Hajjaj's death. When he was arrested by the order of Suleiman (715-717), the new caliph, he silently submitted without any protest or resistance knowing the outcome. On the contrary, the other general Qutaibah Muslim raised his voice against the injustice, rebelled against the caliph and died in the battlefield rather in the prison like Muhammad bin Qasim, the hero. The credit for the conquest of Sindh goes to Hajjaj and not to Mohammad bin Qasim.

(g) Running on the spot

In the past, to defeat an army in a battlefield was easy but to reconstruct the shattered country and to establish an efficient administration was a difficult task and required not only intelligence and skill but a consummate diplomacy, to fulfill the requirements of the people. Victory in a battlefield usually resulted in defeat of the opponent, but a mere victory was not enough to win the heart of the majority of the people, because, in most cases, the people were not overall concerned about the war effort. The real task of the victor began after the war and only in case of social, economic and political changes, the transformation of a society took place. If the victor improved the life of the majority of people by changing the old structure, he would be welcomed by the people, but if he compromised with the existing system in the interest of accumulating power for himself the change in rulers would not bring about any real change in society. Keeping this in view, we shall examine the conquest of the Arabs and see whether it brought any radical changes in the existing structure of Sindh or left it intact.

Regarding administration, Hajjaj's instructions to Muhmmad bin Qasim were: Kill all those who would offer any resistance; imprison the sons and daughters of the warriors as hostages; pardon those who would submit and impose the pol

tax *(Jiziya)* on them; don't levy heavy taxes on the artisans and merchants; and treat the peasants and agriculturists with kindness, Hajjaj emphatically ordered Muhammad bin Qasim to give respect only those to who belonged to the nobility. To handle the common people, a strict policy should be adopted because, in Hajjaj's opinion, people obeyed only those rulers whom they feared.

When the minister of Raja Dahar, Siyakar, submitted to Muhammad bin Qasim, he advised him to keep the revenue administration on the old traditions in order to maintain the social order. Therefore, all the Brahmans and old administrators were allowed to keep their posts and continued to enjoy their traditional privileges. When the question of collection of Jazia arose, the Brahmans were appointed to collect it from the cities and villages. He called a conference and addressed them;

"In the reign of Dahar, you held responsible posts, and you must be knowing all the people of the city as well as of the country all around. You must inform us which of them are noteworthy and celebrated and deserve kindness and patronage at our hands; so that we may show proper favour to them, and make grants to them. As I have come to entertain a good opinion of you, and have full trust in your faithfulness and sincerity, I confirm you in previous posts. The management of all the affairs of State, and its administration, I leave in your able hands, and this (right) I grant (also) to your children and descendants hereditarily, and you need fear no alteration or cancellation of the order thus issued."

When the new Arab rulers kept the Brahmans on in their traditional posts and permitted them to keep their old position in society the Brahmans returned in kind. In gratitude they cooperated with the new government and convinced the people of Sindh to be loyal to the Arab rulers and pay them all taxes, along with the *Jizya*.

"O ye respectable and well-known gentlemen of the place, all of you know that Dahar is killed, and that the rule of the infidels has terminated entirely. Now all the country, whether Sindh or Hind, is under the absolute sway of the people of

Arabia. Before them, the highest and the lowest, the townsmen and the countrymen, are alike, and whatever we few do, must be considered as done under the direction of the great king. They have sent us to you on a mission, having given us splendid hopes. If we would not submit to these Arabs and obey them, neither any property will be left with us nor any other means of subsistence.

We are reduced to a helpless condition, and it is only through the kindness and goodness of the masters of the kingdom, that we can hope to secure position or respect. Otherwise we will be instantly driven away, and cut off root and branch from our native land. If you do not submit to the payment of the tributes fixed on you, we may have to bear a heavier burden still. We shall, however be on the look-out for a favourable opportunity to emigrate to some town in the land of Hind and Sindh with our families, and then we shall be quite safe. We must go to such a place, for nothing is more valuable to a man than his personal safety. When we extricate ourselves from our dangerous position, and save ourselves from being molested by the Arab army, then only can we securely enjoy the possession of our family and property."

Therefore, the Arabs, after the victory over the Sindhi army, did not bring revolutionary changes in the administration. On the top of the administration was an Arab governor but on the lower strate remained the officers who had worked under the Sindhi rulers. In this way, inspite of their victory, they had to depend on the cooperation of the local officers and continued to follow the old policy towards the low castes, classes, and tribes which was adopted by the former rulers. For example, when Muhammad bin Qasim asked Siyakar and Moko Wisayo how to treat the Lohana tribe, they told him:

"In the reign of Rai Chach the Luhanas, that is, the Lakhahs and the Sammahs were not allowed to use soft clothes of silk or velvet. On the contrary they used to wear a rough black blanket, and put on a rough coarse scarf on their shoulders, and they went about with bare head and feet. If any one of them wore some soft stuff, he was fined, and when they went out of their houses, they used to take a dog with them, in

order that they might easily be distinguished from the other tribes. None of their elders or chiefs were allowed to ride a horse."

On hearing this, Muhammad bin Qasim remarked:

"What a villainous set of people these are . . . and they should be treated as such." This shows that the Arabs did not make any attempt to improve the condition of the lower classes.

However, the results of the Arab conquest were that a new class of Arab conquerors emerged who wielded political power; occupied high offices; and possessed the best agricultural lands. This class was assisted by the local officers, who collaborated with them in order to keep their properties and privileges, but as far as the majority of the people are concerned, the conquest did not bring any change to their social and economic condition, but on the contrary they were more exploited by the Arabs and the local collaborator classes.

THE FEUDAL CONNECTION

The history of every country has a different characteristic. The climate, soil, geographical location, trade and commerce, contibute to shaping the culture and civilisation of a society. The process of history is not the same in every country, it differs from land to land and from people to people. To understand the history and culture of Sindh, it is necessary to study the different social, political, and economic groups who were active in the past. These groups, with a different social and political outlook, were distinct in the history of Sindh.

One of the significant groups was of the tribal people who wandered from one place to another in search of livelihood. Their main source of income was cattle breeding. They neither obeyed the government nor abided by any law. To pay any tax was loathesome to them. They maintained their independence and fought against the rulers whenever they were forced to come under government control.

In case of famine or drought, when their economic resources were exhausted, they raided the cities and plundered them. These tribes could not contribute much to culture and civilisation because all their energies were exhausted in fighting against natural calamities and defending themselves against other hostile tribes or government forces. The numbers of these tribes remained low and, therefore, did not create problems of spatial location and economic pressure. They remained isolated from the civilised world and their geographical knowledge was confined to the surrounding areas.

The other group consisted of peasants and petty landowners who were settled in villages. For the protection of their farms they needed government protection and in lieu of it they paid the taxes and agricultural revenue. By nature they were peace-loving people who preferred not to get involved in wars.

The third group lived in the cities and consisted of the nobility, administrative staff, artisans, and traders. This group survived on the surplus income of the rural areas. They had

political power, maintained an army, and formulated a legal framework which protected their vested interests. But these urban centers were greatly affected by political changes, invasions, and attacks. The cities were plundered and the population was massacred. The sense of insecurity always haunted the population of the urban centers.

The dynasties which ruled Sindh failed to maintain a durable peace in the country. The Arab Kingdoms remained entangled in civil wars which exhausted the resources of the rulers and nothing was left to spend on the welfare of the people. The later dynasties faced continuous aggressions from the Turks, Mughals, Persians, and the Afghans. The meagre resources of Sindh proved insufficient to maintain a large standing army. Thus Sindh was conquered repeatedly and each time suffered at the hands of invaders.

The unstable political condition was not favourable to the industry which remained rudimentary and confined to fulfilling development of the basic needs of the ruling classes. Trade and commerce could not flourish because of the poor law and order situation. The roads were not safe and caravans were looted by nomadic tribes which greatly hampered trade activities and discouraged the foreign merchants from coming to Sindh. The traders generally employed soldiers for their protection but this increased the cost of the commodities.

Because of its geographical location, Sindh was invaded time and again. Most of the invaders came from Bolan, Gomal, Tochi, Khurram, and Khyber passes. When the Turks and Mughals established their rule in northern India they also tried to rule over Sindh. As there were no high mountains, thick forests or ferocious rivers to stop them, the invaders came unhindered and marched towards the capital to occupy it. The occupation of the capital meant control over the government.

As a result of the change of government, the urban population was greatly affected while the rural population remained unaware of any change at all. Every new dynasty preserved the old administrative set-up and the same revenue officials continued to collect the revenue. For the majority of the people, the political change did not affect their lifestyle,

therefore, it went unnoticed. Nobody mourned the fall of a dynasty nor rejoiced at the victory of a new ruling family. No ruling dynasty made any attempt to make roots among the poor people. They remained aloof from locals and patronised the foreign cultures from which they hailed.

The people who migrated from Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran, brought along with them their religious prejudices and intolerance. The government always patronised these foreigners and appointed them to such high religious ranks as *Qazi*, *Mufti*, and *Sadr*. Religious schools were founded and a generous grant was awarded to them. To maintain their status, they helped the government to crush all enlightened and liberal movements.

Instead of promoting egalitarian ideals, they strengthened the racial prejudices. Thus, the Sayyids, Mughals, and the Pathans became superior to the local tribes and castes. These foreign groups helped every government in eliminating the local rebel groups. For example, the Sayyids of Bhakkar fully supported the Arghuns in massacring the local tribes of Dharija, Balochs, and Machchis.

Sindh, from the time of the Arab rule to the Talpurs, remained a feudal society. The feudals completely controlled means of production. There were many political upheavals but the feudal class maintained its position by cooperating with every ruler and every invader. As a result the whole society became stagnant. Feudal traditions and its exploitative institutions suppressed the people and made them play the role of a lazy and indolent people.

The common people of Sindh suffered throughout history under the feudal system. All their problems remained unsolved. Hunger, poverty, illiteracy, illness, insecurity, and physical weaknesses sapped their energy and morale. They surrendered to circumstances, taking refuge in mysticism which preached tolerance towards all injustice and suffering. The business of the *pirs* and *sufis* flourished and every town and village had holy tombs to absorb the remaining income of the poor people. In the end nothing was left except illusive hopes.

There were some resistance movements against the rulers and the feudals but they failed as a result of lack of maturity. The best example is the rebellion of Shah Inayat, which was ruthlessly crushed by the combined efforts of the nobels, the *ulema,* sufis, and the government.

Sindh suffered in the past. Sindh is suffering today. The feudal class in the past collaborated with every ruler and exploited the people. It kept society backward. Today they are playing the same role by keeping the people illiterate, superstitious, hungry, and dependent. It is always easy to rule weak and ignorant people.

SINDH UNDER FOREIGN RULE

One of the characteristics of the history of Sindh is that Sindhis have never invaded other countries and extended their territorial boundaries. The vast area and scanty population did not put any economic pressure on the people to emigrate or invade other lands in search of material resources. But on the other hand Sindh remained attractive to the foreign invaders because of its wealth and resources. It was repeatedly invaded by different foreign powers and these foreign invasions greatly affected the history and culture of Sindh.

On investigating the reasons of these foreign invasions, the question arises that why was Sindh conquered repeatedly by the foreigners and what were the positive and negative results of these conquests? The study of Sindh's history clearly shows that the Sindhi rulers and ruling classes resisted the invaders to defend their properties, but at the same time there were certain sections of the society who collaborated with the invaders and helped them conquer their land. Especially after the conquest, these collaborators assisted the new rulers in the administrative work and helped them in consolidating their rule.

Generally there emerged two sections of the society who collaborated with invaders. Firstly there were those social, political, and religious groups who were deprived of a dignified place in the society by the reigning government. The path of their progress was blocked and they were not allowed to demand any right. The exploitation and brutal oppression isolated these groups from the mainstream society, their loyalty to the government weakned and hostility against the establishment nourished up to such an extent that they readily helped anybody who wanted to overthrow the government either by conspiracy or violence. These groups proved useful to all the invaders in quelling the rebellions and winning friends and sympathisers.

The other group which collaborated with the conquerors was of the feudal lords and the nobility. When the signs of defeat were visible, moral pressure on them against shifting their loyalty from one ruler to another was no problem for

them, Their only concern was how to preserve their status, privileges, and properties. Once it was achieved, they swifly changed their loyalty. The best example of this cooperation is the Arab conquest of Sindh when the privileged Brahmans fully collaborated with the Arabs and persuaded the people to recognise their rule. Once this group helped the Arabs to conquer Sindh, the Arab conquerors in order to protect their status and privileges did not change the social and administrative structure and kept it intact. Similarly when the tribal leaders realised that the Arabs conquest was imminent, they not only cooperated with the conquerors but, to please them they even changed their religion.

The Arabs, unlike the other conquerors, did not leave Sindh with the war booty , but stayed there permanently. Soon after the establishment of their rule, a large number of Arab population migrated to Sindh and settled there. As the number of the Arabs was less than the local population, the Arab ruling classes adopted two methods to consolidate their power, one was to crush any rebellion with the help of the army, and the other was to keep a distance between the conquerors and the vanquished. This divided the society of Sindh into two distinct groups, the foreigners and the locals. The foreigners who defeated the local people, tried to keep them culturally backward in order to rule over them. The foreign culture flourshed as a result of the official patronisation and undermined the growth of the local culture. Arabic became the official language and blocked the development of the local languages. It further created a gulf between the rulers and the ruled. The ruling classes strengthened when slowly a large number of people converted to Islam and, after losing their identity, integrated into the Arab culture. This process greatly affected the cultural traditions of Sindh, the foreign culture dominated the local and sapped its vigour and energy.

As the historical evidence shows, the Arab conquest did not bring any structural change in the Sindhi society. It remained divided on the basis of classes and tribes. The political situation further deteriorated when the Arab tribes arrived in Sindh and brought the tribal conflicts and prejudices with them. After the decline of the Abbasid dynasty, the independent Arab Kingdoms were established in Sindh. The

perennial civil war among these Arab Kingdoms prevented political unity of Sindh and the common people suffered as a result of plundening and looting of the wandering armies.

After the Arabs, the two local dynasties, Soomra and Samma came into power. It is the irony of history that insteau of being proud of being local, these dynasties claimed to be Arab in origin. The Soomras backed their origin from the Abbasid capital Sammra where they came from. The same claim of Arab origin was made by the Summas.

This reflected the cultural backwardness of the locals who, after the defeat and conversion, lost all pride to be local and were ashamed to call themselves Sindhis. Once they established their claim of foreign origin, they patronised the foreign groups of the society and ignored the locals. This process slowly isolated the people from the ruling classes and that was the reason why the new invaders easily deleated them. The Samma dynasty was easily defeated by the Arghuns and no popular resistance was made against them.

The conquest of the Arghuns brought a new charge to Sindh. Uptill now the Arab culture dominated Sindh but after the arrival of the Arghuns and the Tarkhans, the Central Asian influence was established and the relations of Sindh with Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia were consolidated. Persian replaced Arabic as the official language and the Chingizi and the Timurid traditions and institutions were followed by the ruling dynasties.

The Arghun conquest was made possible because of the collaborators. They guided the new rulers in administering the country and crushing the opposition. A leading religious scholar Qazi Qazan advised the Arghun ruler to suppress all opposition ruthlessly.

The Arghuns and the Tarkhans were fallowed by the Mughals, the Kalhoras, and the Talpurs. Although the Kalhoras were local but they claimed to be Abbasid and integrated with the foreign groups. The result of the foreign rule was that a large number of people arrived from Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia and settled in Sindh. The

dominant groups of the immigrants were nobles, ulema, mystics and scholars who kept themselves aloof from the local people and joined the ruling classes who patronised them by granting *jagirs,* stipends, and appointing them to high ranks. This created a strong group of foreingers who controlled the political power and possessed the material resources. The local people were completely deprived of privileges and status.

It was in the interest of these foreign groups to keep themselves isolated from the locals in order to assert their cultural superiority. The distinction was made in the dress, food, houses, and the language. As Persian was the court language, all literature was produced in this language. It is the irony of history that today all these poets and scholars are neither known in Iran nor in Sindh. Persian language, which was foreign to the soil did not give them any place in the literary history of Iran. Their whole creation was lost once Persian language ceased to be the official language. This literature is now a part of history and not a part of Sindhi culture.

Although the foreigners were permanently settled in Sindh, yet they maintained their identity through their tribes and families and did not integrate with the locals. In case of a marriage between a foreigner and a local, the children were regarded inferior and contemptuously referred to as Sindhis. In the cities they had separate residential areas and even their graveyards were separate.

The policy of discrimination was advantageous to the foreign ruling classes because as a result of backwardness, the local population recognised the superiority of the foreigners and became submissive and loyal to their rule. The majority of them were peasants and lived in the rural areas which further alienated them from the urban population which was more advanced culturally. The urban and rural cultures of Sindh remained foreign and local respectively, keeping a division between the two groups.

Slowly and gradually the foreign ruling classes dominated the whole resources of Sindh and deprived the local Sindhis of all comforts and the basic needs. This class, throughout the

history, collaborated with every invader to protect their interests and helped them crush opposition and rebellions. Consequently, the social structure of the Sindhi society remained unchanged and the oppressed classes were kept in chains. The Arabs, the Mughals, and the Baloch, as foreigners, ruled Sindh and ruthlessly decimated the local population and wiped out their cultural identity.

The rule of the foreign ruling dynasties left Sindh a desolated and barren country. As their rule was basd on violence, they put down all rebellions with an iron hand. The only purpose of their government was to collect as much revenue from the land as possible, therefore, the poverty and terror made the local people docile. The urge to resist against the injustices diminished. They not only accepted the superiority of the foreign culture but also looked down on their own traditions and values.

As these ruling classes had no roots among the people. It was easy for every invader to conquer Sindh. When the English invaded, they faced no serious resistance. The Sindhi society was disntegrated and was not capable to defend itself against any aggressor.

This analysis provides us an opportunity to examine the present situation of Sindh. As the social structure of the Sindhi society has not changed, still there are groups of collabarators who are ready to cooperate with every government to protect their privileges and to enhance their power and wealth. The Sindhi society is still disintegrated and divided and not in a position to protect its interests.

In order to defend itself, the Sindhi society needs basic changes in the social structure. Unless all social and cultural groups are integrated in the society on equal basis, and the domination of the feudal is not eliminated the Sindhi society cannot unite to fight for democracy and enlightenment. *Nur Muhammad Kalhoro: Re-examined.*

When history is written under the shadow of nationalism, everything that happened in the past is painted in bright colours and every ruler, general, and diplomat is depicted as a hero

and a great man. This perspective transforms all tyrants and oppressors, into just and pious rulers who loved the people. The writing of history under the influence of religious devotion further blurs the vision of historians who eulogize the `great men' to such an extent that they become sacred and infallible and no historian dares to reveal even their human weaknesses. No critical analysis of their role is encouraged which might reveal their crimes.

The time has already come when history should be liberated and be allowed to examine the character and role of the individuals and pronounce the judgement against those who were not punished when they were in power. It is the task of historians to discover all their misdeeds and expose them to the public. The punishment of history will remind all those who are in power that history is watching them, and historians are preserving all acts of their corruption. The judgement of history. . . . should be so powerful that it should dismantle their scared images and pull them down from high pedestals to the level of criminals and thugs. History should especially not spare those who rule over the destinies of the people. If any act is committed by them against the interests of people, they should be made accountable. History should preserve every aspect of their life and record every weakness of their character giving them no chance to become holy and sacred.

With this point of view, we examine the role of Miyan Nur Muhammad, the Kalhora ruler, who became the ruler of Sindh at a time when India was passing through a period of political anarchy, social disintegration, and economic crises. The Mughal ruler had lost all of his power and was no more capable of defending his empire or his people against internal and external invasions. When the Kalhora dynasty came into power, it was expected to get rid of the Mughal tutelage and declare independence, but they remained loyal to the Mughals and technically kept the status of Sindh as a Mughal province. The Kalhoras adopted the policy of collaboration rather than resistence and recognised the overlordship of the Mughal ruler.

The weakness of te Kalhora dynasty was that they assumed power not as a result of resistance but because the Mughal administration failed to get any financial benefit from

Sindh and handed over the administration to the Kalhoras. The peaceful transfer of power did not create any awareness and the people remained apathetic. The Kalhoras could not train their armies to defend Sindh and when Nadir Shah invaded Sindh in 1739, there was no power to stop him.

At this juncture, when we examine the role of Miyan Nur Muhammad, he comes out not as a defender of his country and people but as a man who was selfish, self-centered, and decided to save his family and treasure rather than the people.

As soon as he received the news of Nadir Shah's invasion, he left the capital with his family and treasure and took refuge at Umarkot. He failed to defend those people who were his loyal subjects and left them at the mercy of the invaders, to be massacred and plundered. He tried his best to save the treasure rather than to recruit an army to fight.

The same policy was adopted when Abdali invaded Sindh. He escaped and died in exile. There was an alternative policy for Miyan Nur Muhammad, to fight and defend his country and people. He might have been defeated, but this defeat could have made him a hero and a great man in history. Now he has no right to have a dignified place in history.

The legacy which was left by Miyan Nur Muhammad was the establishment of the Afghan supremacy over Sindh. The rulers of Sindh continued to pay the tribute to the Afghan rulers. Once the weakness of Sindh was discovered, the Afghan invasions became regular features. At the time of the succession, the different claimants of the throne, in order to get the support of the Afghan King, bribed them and invited their armies to help them get power. The tradition to come to power with the aid of foreign powers is not new in our country, we inherited it from our past history.

IN DEFENCE OF NAOMAL

Introduction

Seth Naomal, a Hindu trader, belonged to the Lohana tribe of Sindh. His family had a great reputation in the business communities of the Indian Sub-Continent and owned a number of factories not only in India but in Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. When the port of Karachi was developed, his family settled at Karachi where Naomal was born either in 1804 or 1805. As a young man he widely travelled and gained the experience in business and trade. In 1835, he came close to Colonel Pottinger and helped the British forces when they crossed Sindh to attack Afghanistan. He provided all assistance to the East India Company at the time of the occupation of Sindh in 1843. In Sindh, Naomal is regarded as a traitor. But those who accuse him, fail to understand the reasons of his treason. What were the factors that made Naomal a traitor? In this brief study an attempt is made to analyse the condition of Sindh and the role of Naomal and point out those factors which contributed to make him a traitor.

(a) India in the Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century Indian society was in a process of disintegration. There were political upheavals, social turmoils, and economic crises. The decline of the Mughal empire provided apportunities to the adventurers to establish their own independent states. It weakened the Indian Unity and the condition favoured the English to conquer India.

The English conquest of India became easy as they found in every state and province the groups of people who were ready to collaborate with them. Different social and political groups who were not satisfied under the rule of their rulers helped the English. These groups included those individuals who were not treated well by the rulers and wanted to take revenge, the minorities, who were not secured and saw protection in case of the English rule. The English on the other hand encouraged these hostile and oppressed groups to

collaborate with them and promised to provide them political, social, and economic security.

In the nineteenth century of India there was no such concept as of Indian nation. Instead of nationalism and patriotism, the loyalty of the people to the ruling dynasty was emphasised. The social and political condition of India was not favourable to promote nationalism. First of all there were a number of independent states in the Indian sub-continent with quite different cultures, and civilizations. The boundaries of these states changed from time to time as the weaker-kingdoms were conquered and absorbed in the powerful states. Even in one state the difference of languages, customs and habits, and religions prevented them to unite as one people. Mostly the different groups maintained their loyalty to their tribe, family, or leaders. Every ruling family in India derived its power from the loyalty of his subjects, thus, the people were urged by the social traditions and religious teaching to be loyal to the ruling dynasty irrespective of the considerations that how they came into power. Once an individual or a family assumed power either by military power or conspiracy, it was incumbent upon every man to obey him. Loyalty to the ruling family undermined and prevented the growth of nationalism and patriotism in India.

When the Mughal empire declined, in the petty principalities and states the ruling families were frequently changed as a result of political vicissitude compelling people to shift their loyalty also from one ruler to another. The process, therefore, greatly weakened the roots of legitimacy.

In the political structure of India, the ruler had absolute power and the people as a subject had no role to play to chose their ruler. If a ruler was enlightened and benevolent, people lived in peace and security. If a tyrant came into power, they endured all the cruelties with patience. On the other hand the attitude of the nobility differed with people. They remained loyal to the ruler as long as he was strong and patronized them by granting jagirs and stipends, but as soon as he became weak and failed to protect their privileges, they conspired against him and supported a new candidate who could fulfill their demands.

(b) The Problems of Minorities

There were a number of religious, linguistic, commercial, and cultural minorities in India who were constantly threatened by the majority. Whenever these minorities found their religion, language, or cultural institutions insecure, they opposed the government and were ready to co-operate with any other power who promised to protect them.

On the other hand, there were many such cases in which a religious or linguistic minority ruled over a majority by sheer force of power, in this case,. the majority oppressed by the ruling minority, favoured any change of government in order to shield their religious and economic interests.

In India, the ruler had the absolute power and his person was the fountain of justice. Therefore, if the ruler was pious, he treated all his subject well, in case of a tyrant, the oppressed classes and groups had three alternatives: to migrate to other parts of the country where they hoped to get security or to fight for their rights and compell the ruler to give them their share; or to conspire with the neighbouring powers to invade and overthrow the ruling dynasty.

When the English arrived in India, the oppressed social and religious groups adopted all three methods. There were waves of migration of the families, groups, and the individuals who wandered from one state to another in search of jobs. There were also rebellions of the petty zamindars and peasants against the excessive payment of texas, and there were examples when, at the last resort, these groups helped the English to establish the Company's rule and hoped to get peace and security.

(c) Sindh and the Hindu Minority

In Sindh, the Hindus were in minority and were constantly threatened by the Muslim ruler and the Muslim majority. In the social structure of the Sindhi society, the Muslim nobility possessed all the fertile land as *jagirs* and consequently controlled all agricultural productions. The common Muslims preferred a job in the army or government administration. The

majority of the Hindus were businessmen and petty traders. Before the English conquest, Karachi and Shikarpur were important commercial centers where the prosperous and wealthy Hindu community was populated. There was also a social group of the Hindu community known as *Amits*. They were in the revenue administration and enjoyed a high status in the society.

The Muslim *Jagirdars* and the Hindu traders developed a separate psyche because of their social set up. The Muslim landed aristocracy became rural in character while the Hindu traders urbanized. As merchants, they widely travelled not only to the Indian sub-continent but to Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. This widened their experience and they became more enlightened in comparison with to their counterpart Muslim *Jagirdars*, who remained confined in the villages, ignorant of the changing world. The Muslim aristocracy spent their money on superflous rituals and ceremonies, while the Hindu invested their money in trade and commerce and earned more profits.

The result of these tendencies was that the Muslim aristocracy took loans on high interest from the Hindu *Sahokars* and slowly and gradually became bankrupt. As the Hindu community financially profited at the cost of the Muslim aristocracy, there developed a hostility between these two classes, and their wealth became a source of insecurity for them. The Muslim aristocracy realizing their dependence on the Hindu bankers, adopted hostile attitude towards the Hindu community.

There were a number of English travellers who visited Sindh during the Talpur period and reported on the Hindu-Muslim relations. Although there are reasons not to believe their statements wholly true as it was their interest to create the religious differences for their own advantages, however their observations and reports help us to understand the relations of these two communities. The Hindu community was persecuted from time to time as a result of communal riots. Although the Talpur rulers were not involved in these riots and tried their best to protect their Hindu subject because there were Hindu *Amils* in their administration who served them loyally and the

Hindu traders were a great source of income as they paid the taxes to state treasury and gave loan to the rulers in case of crises but to please the ulama and the Muslims they had to allow the persecution of the Hindus. W. Pottinger, who visited Sindh in 1830-31, writers "They are kept in the most degraded state by their Mahomedan brethren, and their appearance and bearing bespeak their degradation. . . The Hindoos are not permitted to ride any thing superior to a Donkey, or a Bullock nor are they permitted to enjoy any of their festivals."

Another English traveller Poston, who visited Sindh in 1840-41, write about the Hindus, "The country, if it even becomes of commercial importance, must be so through the Hindus: They have long striven against disadvantages which can only be understood by a comparision to the state of Jews in English. They have all the speculative energy adopted for extending commerce, and protection will alone be required to bring it forward."

(d) Hindu Muslim Conflict

The frequent communal riots testified the observations of the English travellers. There were many reasons which explode the religious sentiments on both sides. For example, some time a *Maulwi*, in a missionary zeal, persuaded a Hindu to become a Muslim or a Muslim married a Hindu woman and then converted her, or a Hindu, wishing to marry a Muslim woman, changed his religion. These events created communal tension and frightened the Hindu minority. The Talpur rulers, as Muslims, were not in a position to ban the missionary activities of the ulama. Therefore, the government either kept silence or forced to declare its support to the ulama.

There response of the Hindu community was to declare strike and close all their shops. As the whole business was controlled by the Hindus, the strike paralysed all the activities of daily life. Even the food supply was stopped. Consequently, the government was forced to compromise with them. This indicates that the Hindu community in Sindh was united and instead of submission, resisted against the majority attitude and pressurized the government to accept their demands.

In 1831, a Hindu boy of Nasarpur fled from his home and arrived to Karachi. Some *maulwi* persuaded him to become Muslim. When the news of his conversion was disclosed, the Hindu community of Karachi, as a protest, closed all their shops and went on strike. The Muslims of the city in reaction, put dirt in the wells of Liyari making the water undrinkable to the Hindus.

A maulvi, known as Sayyid Nural Shah, took advantage of the situation and started a campaign against the Hindus. Parsh Ram, the brother of Naomal, tried to stop him from the preaching. The Sayyid, in rage, accused Parsh Ram abusing the Holy Prophet. That was enough to arouse the feelings of the Muslims who threatened the Hindus of Karachi to exterminate them. The Sayyid, to exploit the religious sentiments of the Muslims, travelled to Thatta, Shahbander, Matyari, Hala, and Hyderabad where he made the firey speeches against the Hindus. Parsh Ram was so much afraid that he left Sindh for Jaisalmer to save his life.

The Muslims demanded Mir Murad Ali, the Talpur ruler, to call Parsh Ram to Hyderabad and punish him. As he was not in Sindh, his father Seth Hotchand was called to appear before the ruler. Mir Murad Ali personally wanted to treat him well, but he was pressurized by the ulama to take severe action against the Seth. Mir Murad Ali, instead of deciding the case himself, handed it over to the Qazi of Nasarpur. The Qazi also refused to try the Seth. Finding the situation not favourable, some extremist Muslims kidnapped the Seth and took him to Bagovi, a small town near Shahbander, there they kept him in confinement for 10 or 11 days. It was rumoured in Sindh that the Muslim circumcised the Seth forcibly. It created anger among the Hindus of Sindh and even the neighbouring Hindu states strongly protested against it. Mir Murad Ali, in order to calm down the Hindu sentiments ordered the governor of Thatta to get the Seth released from his captors. The Seth, after his release, came to Hyderabad to see the Mir and expressed his wish to retire from the worldly affairs and spend rest of his life as a mystic. Although, the Seth had the protection of the Mir, yet his life was in danger because of some fanatic Muslims. Therefore, he escaped from Hyderabad and finally

left Sindh and settled at Lakhpat whose Raja welcomed him and provided him all facilities. He stayed in Lakhpat for ten year till Sindh was conquered by the English.

(e) Dilemma of the Hindu Community

Seth Hot Chand was a prominent Hindu of Sindh and when he was treated so badly by the extermist Muslims and failed to get any protection even from the ruler, this horrified the Hindu community and no body felt secured. They concluded that if Seth Hot Chand, inspite of his wealth, influence, and friendship with the Mir, could not be spared and endured such hardships, how could a common and ordinary Hindu be defended by the fanatic Muslims. Moreover, the incident distrubed their relations with the Muslims, and Naomal and the Hindu community now wanted to take revenge of this insult.

At this juncture, there were three alternative for Seth Naomal:

1. To migrate along with his family to some neighbouring Hindu state. But there were many problems in case of migration. No doubt it could solve the problem of his family, but the whole Hindu community was not in a position to immigrate. As a prominent Hindu leader, it was his responsibility to look after the interest of his Hindu community. Moreover, to leave Sindh meant to leave all their business and commercial concerns, therefore, he decided to stay.

2. The second option was to start a movement against the ruler and government who failed to protect the honour of his father. But the Hindus were not in position to start any movement or to rebel against the ruler as they were not a militant community and could be crushed in case of resistance.

3. Under these circumstances, the only possibility was to seek the help of the East India company to conquer Sindh.

In case of the English rule, Naomal saw not only the fulfillment of his personal ambitions, but the advantages to the Hindu community. As he travelled throughout India, he had experience of the English rule which brought peace and order in those areas which were under their rule. Belonging to a commercial community, his interest was more in peace than in war. He fully realized that under the English rule, the Hindu would get more freedom to pursue their social, and commercial activities.

One thing should be kept in mind: Naomal collaborated with the English against the Talpur ruling family and not against Sindh. The Talpurs were foreigners and assumed the power after overthrowing the Kalhoras after a civil war. Therefore, to Naomal there was no moral conflict in supporting another foreign power; therefore, he openly co-operated with the English. The Talpur Mirs were aware of the real causes of Naomal's co-operation with the Company and in one of the meetings, the Mir told Naomal that he, by helping the English, he took revenge of his father's humiliation.

The English conquest of Sindh was not only a personal victory for Naomal, because just after the conquest, his father Hot Chand returned to Sindh after 10 years of exile and was warmely welcomed by the inhabitants of Karachi. But the conquest also opened vast avenues to Hindu community, who made tremendous progress in trade and industry and soon established their commercial firms throughout the English colonies. The commendable aspect is that whatever they earned, they spent a part of their wealth on education and on the works of public welfare. During the English rule Sindh entered into modern age. The British administration introduced railway system, built the roads and the dams, established the municipal system, and promoted the education which changed the whole social and economic structure of the Sindhi society.

(f) Conclusion

History teaches us that if a minority is persecuted and deprived from the basic rights, this isolates it from the mainstream of the society and leads the society to disintegration. A disillusioned minority fails to play an active rôle and dejected by the intolerance of the majority, its leading members migrate to the other country leaving only the uneducated and downtrodden people, who, bereft of any hope, disrupts the society and create anarchy. The society finally pays a high cost if it decides to solve the problems by exterminating the minority.

The policy of intolerance breeds the feelings of unpatriotism and hostility. When a society refuses to give their minorities a dignified place it pushes them towards war and crime or makes them passive getting nothing from their skill and energy. No body is a patriot by birth, it is the society which makes him a patriot or a traitor.

SEPARATION OF SINDH FROM BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

The Hindu Muslim antagonism fully came to surface when the latter demanded separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency. The Muslims of Sindh rejected Sindhi nationalism and sought the help of other Muslim parties of India to support their cause. They launched the campaign of separation in the name of Muslim nationalism saying it was in the greater interest of the Sindhi Muslims.

The Hindu minority, on the other hand, failed to get the support from the Congress which was a non-communalist party and, as a matter of principle, supported the case of separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency. This left the Hindus of Sindh alone to fight their case. The Sindhi nationalism at this juncture did not unite Muslim landlords with the Hindus. To them, the emerging Muslim nationalism offered more opportunities to dominate the Hindu minority once for all and thereby win the support of the Indian Muslims.

Sindh was conquered by the Bombay army in 1943 and four years after its conquest it was absorbed in the Bombay Presidency. Commenting on it, Lord Delhousie had remarked that had Punjab been conquered before, Sindh would have been attached to Punjab.

Thus union of Sindh with the Bombay Presidency from the beginning was regarded unnatural and it remained a controversial issue in the circle of the British administration as well. There was a group within the administration which strongly supported the union of Sindh with Punjab. They argued that Sindh had more in common with Punjab and administratively it was feasible to unite these two provinces into one. In 1903, Curzon refused to attach Sindh with Punjab on the ground that Punjab had already financial problems of its own and could not afford to support Sindh economically.

Despite Curzon's opposition, however, the other group within the British administration continued their campaign to align Sindh with Punjab. This, of course, alarmed the Hindus, and they vehmently opposed such a union as they thought it

would threaten their interests. Therefore, in the beginning, they favoured an autonomous Sindh.

To the Hindus, the idea of separate Sindh looked advantageous. The opening of the N.W. Railway made Karachi an important sea port for the entire hinterland of the north west region including the Punjab. Therefore, prior to 1924, both the Hindus and the Muslims wanted an autonomous Sindh. Later on, when the Muslim League took over the case it became a Muslim issue, and the Hindus began to have apprehensions about the separation. By 1928, they openly opposed it.

The separation, by then, had become a communal issue of the Indian politics. It highlighted the conflict between Muslim landlords and the Hindu bourgeoisie. The latter feared that in case of separation the Muslim feudals would seize political power and undermine their commercial interests. The issue was made to appear as communal but in reality it was a clash of interests between the Muslim feudals and the Hindu business community. The Simon Commission (1927) rightly observed that:

". . . This demand has gathered strength not so much in the houses of the people, or among the Muhammadan cultivators of Sindh, as among the leaders of Muhammadan thought all over India, to whom the idea of a new Muslim province, contiguous to the predominently Moslem areas of Baluchitan, the North-West Frontier province and the Punjab, naturally appeals as offering a stronghold against the fear of the Hindu domination".

It is worth nothing here that the tiny group of the educated Sindhi Muslims, belonging to the feudal class, became the champions of separation in the hope of more seats in the Sindh Legislature and Executive. Among them who supported the issue were Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, Sir S.N. Bhutto, and M.A. Khuro.

On the other hand the Hindus argued that the separation of Sindh became a demand of the Indian Muslims to have a Muslim majority province and to use it for their interests rather than the interests of the Sindhi Muslims. They rightly feared

that as a minority, their freedom would be curtailed by the Muslim majority and process of modernisation which started by them would be stopped.

In one of the letters to the Viceroy they highlighted their contribution. "We supplied for generations the bulk of administrative staff and professional talent; we have been the pioneers in the fileds of education, social reform and local government; we sowed the seeds of public life in Sindhi; we did not only stimulate its internal trade but went abroad to bring it indigenous banking system of the country and connected it with the trading centres of India and the world outside."

The Hindu business community was afaid that in case of separation, the weak economic condition of Sindh would require an increase of taxation and they would have to pay higher taxes. They were also apprehensive of the widening of franchise which would reduce their seats in the elective bodies. They rightly observed that the separation would enhance the power of the feudals, who by virute of their status, would win elections and thus undermine moderanisation of Sindh. As the most educated and enlightened community they demanded protection from the backward feudal aristocracy.

In arguing their case they said, "As a matter of fact, we own 27 per cent of land.... but we held 13 per cent more land as leasees and montgages in possession, so we account for the entinre income tax revenue. We pay an ovenwheling part of excise as it is almost wholy collected form the cities where we are in majority. The number of literates among us is three times the number of literates in the Muslim community; that of the English educated people, we have eight the number Muslims have; of notes to day we have about the same number as the majority compunity."

However in 1939, Sindh was separated from Bombay and became an independence province. As a matter of fact, it was not the victory of majority over minority but a victory of feudals over the business community and a victory of the rural power groups over the urban power groups. The separation strengthened feudal forces and consequently, reactionery trends

overpowered all secular and liberal trends. The separation gave an impetus to the Pakistan movement and Sindhi played an important and active role because, for the feudals of Sindh, that was the only option to get rid of the Hindu *sahokars* and to re-acquire their mortgaged lands.

SINDH: THE CHANGING FACES OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism does not emerge from soil or race, but from the internal and external challenges, requirements, interests, and as a result of significant events. Sometimes, it develops and grows only in one section of society and remains dormant in others. After the fulfillment of the requirements or demands, the nationalist feelings diminish or sometimes disappear altogether. Thus, the concept of nationalism changes from time to time and reflects the aspirations of certain groups of a society who use it for their own interests and abandon it when it is not required.

In Sindh, nationalism was first promoted by the Hindus, who, after the English conquest, were liberated from the antiquated Talpur rule. As a minority, they were no longer threatened by the anger of the majority. They were secured and were free to act independently. The state protection helped them to expand their commercial activities. The Britishers were busy conquering and occupying Asian and African countries and the West Indies Islands. The Hindu traders followed the colonialists and established their commercial firms in Africa, West Indies, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Persian Gulf.

Later on they extended their business to America and Europe. The trade brought wealth and soon the cities of Sindh were dominated by the Hindus. Hyderabad, Shikarpur, Larkana, Mirpurkhas and Nawabshah emerged as modern and cultural towns of Sindh. The Hindus promoted education and a number of schools and colleges were built for the community. Prosperity led towards the creation and promotion of a sophisticated culture. A number of Libraries were set up. Gardens were laid out. Clubs were opened. Hospitals were built and different charitable foundations were patronised. There was a revolution in the cities; the residential areas were divided according to the wealth and status. Roads were built and cleanliness of cities was maintained. The Hindus of Sindh, within a short span of time, developed an urban culture which flourished under their patronage.

Excluded from the cities, the majority of Muslims, *zamindars* and *haris*, lived in the rural areas, without education

and without any cultural activities. The Muslim *zamindars* spent their time either in hunting or under opium intoxication. There were few Muslim educational institutions in the cities and the rural areas. The Muslims rarely came to the cities. The urban and rural culture greatly differentiated by two communities. It is said that in Hirabad, a posh, residential area of the wealthy Hindus of Hyderabad, the Muslims were not permitted to enter after 5 pm.

Therefore, it was natural that the Hindus of Sindh, in search of identity, promoted Sindhi nationalism. It was their need to maintain status and position. They had the education and economic resources to enrich Sindhi culture. Thus with the help of Sindhi nationalism, they could politically and economically dominate Sindh and keep the Muslim majority isolated and deprived. It was a powerful tool in the hand of a minority to rule over a majority.

To promote Sindhi nationalism, Sindhi language was adopted as a medium of expression. The Hindu writers enriched the language with their original contribution. A great number of books were translated from English into Sindhi. An English-Sindhi dictionary was compiled. The Risalo of Shah Latif was edited by Gurbakhshani, a commendable job which he did after extensive research and labour. Poetry, novels, short stories, and essays were written which made the language rich. However, their best contribution was in the discipline of history. The period of ancient history of Sindh was selected for research because they could trace the glory of their race in the ancient and not in the Muslim period. The Sindh Historical Society was set up which published a quarterly journal consisting of research articles on Sindh. The society also acquired material on history of Sindh from different sources for research.

The small group of educated Muslims mostly belonged to the feudal class, opposed Sindhi nationalism and adopted a hostile attitude towards it. Instead of Sindhi nationalism, they aligned themselves with Muslim nationalism and took full part in all those movements which were started to promote the cause of Muslims of the Indian subcontinent.

In 1915, when the movement of Silk handkerchief *Reshmi Roomal*, was started with the object to find an independent government against the British Raj, the Muslims of Sindh took very active part in the movement. In the Hijrat movement, which followed the *Reshmi Roomal* movement, a large number of Sindhi Muslims migrated to Afghanistan.

The educated Muslims of Sindh found in the Muslim nationalism a source of pride. G.M. Sayyid was so much overwhelmed by the concept of Muslim brotherhood that he appealed to his Muslim brothers of Lukhnow and Delhi to come to Sindh and rescue the Sindhi Muslims from the clutches of the Hindus. The Muslims feudals of Sindh, realising the weaknesses of their class, did not rely on the Muslim *haris*, but appealed to the Muslim landlords of the UP and other areas of India to liberate them from the Hindu domination. It was the time when Muslim Nationalism suited there intense

MANZILGAH MOSQUE AND THE COMMUNAL CLASH

Sindh, after the separation from Bombay Presidency, faced a number of communal riots which created a deep gulf between the Muslims and the Hindus.

In India, the Congress emerged as a strong political party based on Indian nationalism. It was countered by the Muslim League on the parallel basis of Muslim nationalism, as it was in the interest of the Muslim League to make the Indian Muslims conscious of their Muslim identity. To achieve this, the Muslim League used the slogan that Islam was in danger and warned the Muslims either to unite or be exterminated by the Hindus.

It is important to note here that in Sindh, the Muslim League had not been a popular party and in the 1937 elections it had won only 4.6 per cent votes, getting only one member elected who later on deseated the party. On the other hand, the Congress won 8 seats out of 56. The Sindh Ittehad Party won 18 seats and emerged as the single largest party and formed the government with the cooperation of the Hindu members. Later on, the Muslim League group was formed in the Assembly under Hidayatullah and Bandeh Ali, but it could not play any significant role because it was too weak to overthrow the government of Allah Bakhsh Soomro.

As is typical of the feudal politicians, they remained loyal to the party in power, i.e. the Sindh Ittehad Party, rather than joining the Muslim League which offered them nothing. Realising this weakness, the leaders of the Muslim League decided to bring Muslim masses on to the streets to win back what had been lost in the elections. This tactic was to work as the external pressure. Now the important question was how to arouse sentiments of Muslims in favour of the League? To materialise this, the leaders of the League, Abdullah Haroon, G.M. Syed, M.N. Khuro and others engineered a plan of communal riots on the status of the Manzilgah mosque.

The Manzilgah mosque was situated at Sukkur near a Hindu Temple Sadbela. It was built by Mir Masum, a

mansabdar of Emperor Akbar. Perhaps later on it was abandoned by the Muslims and as no prayers were offered there, the Britishers came to use the compound as an office for some time. However, the compound was soon handed back to the Muslims, who soon restored it to the status of a functional mosque. The Hindus, on the other hand, protested against the restoration, as the mosque was located next to a temple. To avoid conflict, the authorities asked the Muslims to build a wall around the mosque compound which they failed to comply with and the mosque was sealed off in 1938. It was this opportunity which the Muslim League wanted to use for its political ends. A Manzilgah Committee was set up and the Sindh provincial Muslim League demanded that the mosque be handed over to the Muslims. The leaders of the League successfully made it a communal issue and used it against the Ministry of Allah Bakhsh Soomro, who failed to get it restored and consequently it damaged his position in the eyes of the Muslim masses.

To intensify the issue, the Committee observed the Manzilgah Day on August 18, 1938 throughout Sindh and demanded resignation of the Soomro ministry. The Ulema fully utilised the opportunity and vowed to wage a religious war against the Hindus. G.M. Syed took an active part in the campaign and arranged hunger strikes at the doors of all Muslim ministers to pressurise them to resign. On October 1, the Satyagrah was started and nearly a 1000 people were arrested. The government, to ease the situation, released these people on October 3, and restored the mosque to its former status.

This brought a strong reaction from the Hindus and they demanded that the mosque be taken over by the government. By this time, the issue had separated the two communities wide apart and both sides adopted extreme attitudes, leaving no room for reconciliation.

On November 19, the bloody riot took place at the Manzilgah mosque. The police dispersed the gathering and arrested G.M. Syed, who was responsible for provoking communal sentiments and leading the riot to its bloody end where a number of Muslims and Hindus had been killed.

In Sukkur 12 Muslims and 33 Hindus died, while in the district the number of dead persons was 127, out of them two were Muslims and 125 Hindus.

As a result of this bloodshed, the League emerged as a popular party among the Muslim masses. The Ministry of Allah Bakhsh Soomro was overthrown and the Hindus, as a minority, lost the little political power they had. The riot was a triumph of the feudal class which used religion to achieve political ends.

The issue of the Manzilgah is very significant in the modern history of Sindh because after this riot, the League became a strong political party there. It supported the Lahore Resolution of 1940 and in 1943 the Sindh Legislative Assembly strengthened the Pakistan Movement by passing a Pakistan Resolution. Thus by contributing to the Pakistan Movement, the Muslims of Sindh preferred to align with the Indian Muslims in the name of Muslim nationalism and abandoned their ethnic and linguistic Hindus community on the basis of religion.

The Muslim feudals were sure that by reducing power of the Hindu bourgeoisie they could dominate Sindh politically and economically. They also hoped that their victory would provide them an access to the cities. For them a bright future lay ahead.

SINDHI NATIONALISM: THE MODERN PHASE

During the Freedom Movement, the Muslim leadership of Sindh aligned itself with Muslim nationalism. It helped sharpen the conflict with the Hindus and strengthened the sense of a separate Muslim identity in the subcontinent. Sindhi Muslims were active in the *Reshmi Roomal* (Slik Handkerchief) movement, the *Hijrat* (Migration to Afghanistan) and the Khilafat Movements. The roots of this Muslim nationalism were strong in 1947 and that is why Muslim immigrants were welcomed by the Sindhis with a sense of brotherhood and love.

There was no conflict between Sindhis and the Mohajirs in the years immediately after partition. The Mohajirs settled in urban centers such as Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkhar which had been populated by Hindu Sindhis who abandoned their properties and left following the communal frenzy of that time. Since the Sindhi middle-class was underdeveloped the new immigrants (who were middle-class teachers, doctors, lawyers, artists and small traders) quickly moved to fill the vacum and monopolised positions in the bureaucracy and in educational institutions.

In the beginning it wasn't too difficult for the small Sindhi middle-class to find jobs in the expanding state structures. Sentiments of Muslim nationalism were still strong and cultural differences were not emphatic. There was little resistance to the Urdu language, with some Sindhi poets preferring to compose poetry in Urdu rather than in Sindhi. Therefore conflict between the two communities was mininal.

With the gradual rise of the Sindhi middle-classes, however, the relationship began to sour in the late 1950s. The formation of One Unit under Gen. Ayub Khan became the launching pad for Sindhi nationalism because it was viewed as seeking to establish the "Hegemony" of the Punjab over West Pakistan. Sindhis now had to compete for scarce jobs not only with the Mohajirs but also with the Punjabis. Thus the anti-One Unit movement in Sindh was fueled by Sindhi poets, writers and students who were most adversely affected by it. Because

the Mohajirs remained aloof from this movement for Sindhi rights, the interests of the two communities began to diverge.

Since then Sindhi nationalists have attempted to create a Sindhi "consciousness" and "identity" based on the separatedness of their language and history. Following the steps of pre-partition Hindu Sindhi intellectuals who wrote in the Persian script, young Muslim Sindhis began to enrich and popularise their language by writing novels, short stories and poetry in their mother tongue. Urdu and Muslim nationhood were abandoned in favour of a secular, progressive ideal of Sindhi nationhood.

Consequently Shah Abdul Latif was emphasised as a great poet of Sindh and his tomb became the rallying point of Sindhi nationalism. The *Urs* of Shah Latifs (Death Anniversary) is now celebrated with fervour and enthusiasm. Cognisant of these trends, Gen Ayub Khan became the first head of state to offer a "chadar" at the Mazar. Since then, the annual *Urs* is organised by every government to win the hearts of the Sindhis. Shah Latif's Risalo has also become the Bible for all schools of thought who interpret him according to their own points of view.

After `language' came `history' as a source of Sindhi identity. Its first victim was Muhammad Bin Qasim. In reaction to "the Pakistan ideology" and Muslim nationalism, Sindhi nationalists demolished the old symbols and rewrote history to make Raja Dahar a hero for defending the motherland against the Arabs invaders. This was supposed to allude to the arrival of the Mohajirs who, by occupying Sindh, exploited its resources and aggressively edged out the Sindhis. Defence of the motherland now came to mean defence against the Mohajirs.

In order to inspire the new Sindhi generation, the history of Sindh was scratched to locate individuals who had defended the country. Consequently, many persons were resurrected. One such is Husho Shidi, a slave-servant of the Talpur Mirs who was killed fighting the British in the battle of Dabba in 1843. Shidi has been now elevated to the rank of General Hush Muhammad Shaheed.

Besides the need for heroes, Sindhi nationalism also required a supply of `traitors' and `collaborators' who hurt the cause of Sindh. This attitude again reflects the current political situation in which a section of the people is readily available to cooperate with every central government for reasons of personal benefit. Therefore Seth Naomal became a Sindhi traitor for cooperating with the British in their conquest of Sindh. Every modern Sindhi collaborator is now called Naomal and condemned as a traitor.

In the continuing absence of a strong Sindhi middle-class, however, Sindh nationalism is controlled by the Sindhi feudal class for its own purposes. That is why there seems little hope that Sindhi nationalism can play a truly progressive role in creating the sort of awareness among the people of Sindh which is required to lead the way for the restoration of democracy in the country.

A MIDDLE CLASS MESS

It is a common practice that whenever the journalists or the intellectuals of the Punjab go to Sindh to study the political situation, they meet the *vaderas*, bureaucrats and the politicians in posh residential areas and after relishing good food and drink come back to write an article and suggest some solutions. Recently I read such an article in the *The Frontier Post* (dated march 15). The author proudly related his intimate relations with the leading Sindhi feudals including a former minister who sold every open space in Karachi and Hyderabad during the last PPP Government. He mentioned a doctor who served the people of the province irrespective of caste and creed, but he forgot to mention one thing that the doctor treats only if the sick can pay. He also met a feudal-cum-spiritual leader whose hobby is to marry as frequently as he can and who spends the hard-earned money of his *haris* in Europe. The author tried to find the solution of Sindh in the company of these illustrious people. If somebody looks at Sindh through the eyes of the *vaderas* Sindh looks different. The real Sindh is not in Clifton, Defence, in the chambers of commerce or in the *autaq* of the *Vaderas*. The real Sindh is in the *Kachi abadis* where the people live in dirt and misery, the real Sindh is in the interior where the peasants bear silently all brutalities of the feudals.

In Sindh there is killing, shooting and acts of torture, but there is no civil war between Sindhis and non-Sindhis. There is conflict between the middle classes of Sindhis and non-Sindhis, but there is no conflict between the people. In the cities, the Sindhi speaking people are in a minority while in the interior the non-Sindhis are fewer in number, posing no challenge to the economic interest of the peasants. The real clash is between the middle classes of the two ethnic groups and that is why educational institutions are the centers of all political activities. On both sides, they are trying to bring the conflict down to people, so far all attempts have failed. The small traders spend on the markets of the city, while business of the doctors, advocates, and the traders flourish because of the rural population. The interdependence is so great that during the curfew both suffer extremely.

Even in the urban areas the situation has greatly changed. Now there is fighting between people and the government agencies. Recently, in Hyderabad and Karachi, the youth attacked the check posts and police *thanas* because of ill-treatment by and misbehaviour of the police. The conflict is no longer ethnic, it is also between the people and the government.

The phenomenon of the dacoits in rural Sindh is poorly understood. It is a fact that these dacoits are protected by the big landlords and the police. Recently two leading politicians of Sindh pleaded their case and demanded the government to pardon them. The victims of these dacoits in the rural Sindh are all Sindhis, the petty *Zamindars* and the poor *haris*. It is the practice of the dacoits to send a *parchi* to the *Zamindar*, asking him to pay a certain amount of money. In case of non-payment, his fruit trees are cut down and his farms are burnt to ashes. Usually the *zamindar* takes refuge in the city but the worst sufferers are the peasants who work in the fields. The dacoits do not spare them, all of their belongings are taken away and their women are raped and insulted. Once the gardens and farms are burnt, they loose their share in the crops and consequently face starvation and joblessness. There is a chaos in the rural Sindh where the *haris* are wandering in search of jobs and security from one place to another and no nationalist feudal is ready to take care of them. The land is more important to them than people.

Another viewpoint accuses the MQM and makes it a scapegoat for all evils. Nobody bothers to see the real causes of the origin of the MQM. The urban problems and the socio-economic condition of the Sindhi cities created disgruntled youths who became the backbone of MQM. The terrorism is not the monopoly of MQM; the Jiye Sindh, Sindh Shagird Tehrik, and PSF excel in the art of terrorism as well. Actually MQM was first instructed and trained by the political activists of the Jiye Sindh. As the nationalist parties have no root either in the cities or in the rural areas, their survival depends on creating conditions for a political crisis. Same is the case of the MQM. Apparently both are two hostile groups but actually they are helping each other by their acts of terrorism. Each

incident provides a new lease of life to these groups at the cost of the lives of the people.

The solution of these problems is not to increase the number of police-men or to equip them with automatic weapons. The grievances of Sindh are hidden in the socio-economic structure of the society. The feudal system which keeps the pesant in a sub-human level of existence, the bureaucracy which humiliates them so much that they surrender and become submissive, and the politicians who mobilise the masses on mere slogans and ask them to prepare for perennial sacrifices. People have no education, no health care, no job guarantees, no place to live, and no-protection from criminals and *thugs*. These are the problems of the people, Sindhis and Mohajirs alike. Nobody talks about these problems, because the solution of these problems demand the landed aristocracy, bureaucrats, and the army to surrender their privileges and share with the people what they possess. Why nobody talks about the abolition of the feudal system and distribution of land among the *haris*? It would solve the problems of unemployment, hunger and starvation in the rural areas. A common *hari* is not concerned about the quota system, the domicile, Kalabagh Dam, and Pano Aqil cantonment. These are the problems of the middle and upper classes. His first problem is to have a small piece of land for his survival. Once the land belongs to him, he would fight for its preservation against all dacoits.

At present there is no government in Sindh, all its institutions have collapsed. There is chaos and unrest. The people are fed up of the riots, curfews, and police brutalities. However, there are some positive signs, political consciousness is growing deeply and slowly and the people are trying to recognise those who are benefiting from this situation. It is high time for the intellectuals to enlighten the people by analysing the problems objectively and pointing out the role of the feudals, army, bureaucrats, and politicians who are responsible for the deteriorating situation in Sindh.

TOWARDS A COMPLETE ETHNIC DIVIDE

In a recent statement the Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that another Shiekh Mujibur Rehman has emerged in Sindh who is creating political anarchy and chaos which will ultimately render irreparable damage to Pakistan. The statement poses a number of questions: Was Shiekh Mujibur Rehman a traitor? If he was, the army action in East Pakistan leading to the massacre of the people, and the decimation of the Bengali intellectuals was justified. People who were responsible for these actions, should emerge as heroes and patriots because what they did were not crimes, but deeds of good faith and patriotism. Further, the whole movement for Bangladesh was attributed to Indian infiltrators and the Hindu community who supposedly poisoned the good brotherly relations of the Muslims and created discord which consequently led to the dismemberment of Pakistan. The conspiracy theory concealed all the crimes and follies which our ruling classes had perpetrated against the Bengalis.

Instead of learning a lesson from history, we try to forget it. Nobody mourned over the death of United Pakistan. Our ruling classes, on the contrary, were relieved that the trouble makers, anarchists and miscreants (Bengalis) had at last left them in peace.

If this is the approach to analyse the political situation of Sindh, I believe it would create the same problems as we experienced in the past. From the very inception of Pakistan those in power labelled their political opponents as traitors and instead of entering into a dialogue with them they either imprisoned or eliminated them. Our country is always divided into patriots and the traitors. When in power, the traitors become patriots and patriots the traitors.

Further, parallel events never happen in history. The political situation of Sindh is not similar to East Pakistan. To analyse it with this view will take us in the wrong direction. In Sindh, the nature of the conflict is quite different. Basically it is ethnic in origin, but other elements have made it more complex. Now in Karachi, the conflict is between PPP and the

MQM. It is a fact that since the PPP's break with MQM, its students wing is armed to crush the power of MQM. The fact that Sindh Government is a party in the conflict and instead of playing the role of an honest umpire, it sided with its own party is also a matter of concern.

In Hyderabad, the clash is between MQM and the extremist Sindhi parties. These extremist Sindhis are trying to divide the city on ethnic basis. In the Sindh University which is a strong base of Jiye Sindh, nearly all the non-Sindhi students are forced to leave. Except a few, all government and semi-government offices have been transferred to the Sindhi areas. In the interior of Sindh, non-Sindhi students are not allowed to take admission in schools and colleges. Those families who could afford it, migrated from interior Sindh when the first wave of violence was witnessed. Migration of non-Sindhis has been more or less completed due to the recent violence.

The whole situation strengthens the political power of the MQM. They have expelled the Sindhi families from Hyderabad and completely control the city now. The city and Latifabad have become dominantly Mohajir populated areas while Qasimabad, Citizen Colony, Wahdat Colony, and Gulistan-i-Sajjad have become exclusively Sindhi areas. Once the Mohajirs ar driven from the interior of Sindh, the ethnic division of Sindh will be complete. Indirectly, the Sindhi extremists are helping the MQM to become more powerful and to champion the cause of Mohajirs.

Ethnically, Sindh is already divided into two parts. There is a possibility that the Sindh Government at one stage, on the plea of security, might decide to transfer its capital from Karachi to some Sindhi-dominated town. If this happens, division of Sindh will become inevitable.

The future of Sindh looks bleak. During this process the whole educational system has collapsed, greatly damaging the growth of the middle class. The weakening and elimination of the middle class means the domination of the feudals over the social order. The dacoit-feudal unity in the interior of Sindh has already established their rule over the rural population. Once the Mohajir-dominated cities are separated, no group will

remain to challenge their authority and power. The perennial conflict between the Sindhis and Mohajirs will continue, perhaps with more bloodshed.

The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that neither Police nor the Army can control it. However, if the situation of Sindh is not controlled, the whole country will be affected economically and politically. It is wrong to put all the blame on infiltrators from some foreign country, seen to be destablising the country by creating political anarchy in Sindh. With this approach, the situation of Sindh cannot be analysed. It is easy to shift the responsibility on others and be satisfied, but it would not solve the problem. If a society is strong and united, no infiltrator can destabilise it. It is the weakness of the society which provides a chance to everybody to use it for its advantage. Let us concentrate on sorting out the internal conflicts and weaknesses, and accuse ourselves rather than others.

The solution of Sindh situation is there, but it is very costly and perhaps not acceptable to the ruling classes. There is a need of extensive development in the province in the interior as well as in the urban centers. Education, employment, health, security and recreation are the basic rights of every Pakistani and it is the government's responsibility to provide them. If we spend the major part of our budget on the Army in order to protect our borders, there is a danger that internal conflicts will be fatal to the existence of the country. There is a choice, either to let only the Army save the country from external dangers or to let a united nation defend itself.

A REBEL BY ANY OTHER NAME

Recently I went to Hyderabad Sindh (1990) where I had spent the best years of my life. This was the first time I had returned since the November 1990 elections. The train, as on every other occasion I had travelled to Sindh, was late. The passengers, accustomed to it, did not complain. When an action is repeated so often it becomes the norm, rather than the exception. People no longer have the urge to protest. Once the desire to seek the good has been dismissed and people have learnt submission then the more disorder you throw in their path the more they accept.

When I entered Sindh the first thing I noticed at Rohri was that a number of young men entered the compartment and occupied all the vacant seats. None of them had tickets. When the ticket collector asked them to show their tickets, they refused. He politely reprimanded them and then silently moved ahead. Perhaps this farce of checking tickets has become routine. And perhaps the ticket collector did not want to get into trouble. Though this incident was not really of earth-shaking importance, it still struck me as very serious, because it was violation of a law.

Why do people violate the law, I asked myself. I keep on coming around to the idea that people violate the law only when they are alienated and deprived. When a state fails to provide its citizens with the basic amenities, when either their stomachs or minds are empty, they are more likely to revolt against the System and against all systems. This phenomenon of ticketless students helped me to understand the dacoit activities in the interior of Sindh. I recall a historian once defining robbers as "primitive rebels." It is customary to try and analyse the personality of the dacoit through the eyes of the establishment. Therefore a dacoit is a person who robs, kills, and creates terror.

As `primitive rebels,' the dacoits have no political consciousness and understanding of the social and economic problems of the society in which they live. They are motivated to rob or to kill on personal grounds. There are social,

cultural, and economic reasons which lead a peace-keeping individual to dacoity. Injustice, financial hardships, and personal or family humiliation are the main reasons. Finding no justice, no help, and no hope, he, in utter helplessness, rebels. Psychologically he hates society, not merely the class which exploits him, but the whole of society. He lacks the understanding to pinpoint the real exploiters, but takes revenge on one and all. This is the reason why he kills, robs, and terrorises all people indiscriminately. He justifies all his acts and doings. He argues that no one had helped him when he was in trouble, nor had tried to understand the problems he had to face. He thinks of himself as abandoned by society. In such cases there are two alternatives for an individual. He can either surrender and be persecuted or rebel and resist. Generally the majority of people, having no courage, succumb to injustices and silently bear all hardships. Once bowed down, it becomes easy for the ruling classes to exploit them fully. Only certain individuals refuse to surrender, and rebel,. As outlaws, the ruling classes try to eliminate them in the name of law and order.

The state justifies its actions by highlighting these individuals criminal actions, the act and not cause. They further enforce their definition of good and bad on an unsuspecting public by rewarding the law-enforcing agencies that put away such criminals.'

There was a news item in a newspaper (Dawn, Dec. 6, 1990) with the caption "Law and Order at all Cost." The statement is attributed to the adviser of the Chief Minister of Sindh who said that stern action would be taken against criminals, dacoits, kidnappers and terrorists. No law-breaker would be spared howsoever influential he might be. This is the attitude of the authorities to solve the problem of rising anarchy by exemplary punishment. So far no attempt has been made to understand the phenomenon of the dacoits on the basis of sociological or cultural studies. Nobody is ready to understand the formula that a disease can only be cured when it is correctly diagnosed.

So, the dacoits of Sindh are 'primitive rebels.' Their only motive is to get some money from those who have money. So

far their activities have been confined only to the interior. They live in the jungles and are sometimes patronised by the big landlords, but the question is: Is it possible that with the passage of time, these `primitive rebels' would become political insurgents, guerillas, and freedom-fighters?

DACOITY: AN UNORGANISED FORM OF SOCIAL PROTEST

The phenomenon of dacoity occurs only in those societies where there is no law and order and where the state authority fails to assert its power. English historian Habsbawm writing on the origin of banditry says that "social banditry has next to no organization or ideology". To a person the choice to become a bandit is always difficult. As it appears from the different accounts of the bandits, they chose to be outlaws as a last resort, because to be a dacoit means to cut off all social and cultural relations with society and be condemned to spend the rest of life in seclusion, in prison, or to be killed.

In the beginning the bandit starts his career alone but soon his daring adventures attract the disgruntled elements, mostly from the peasentry, to join him. The only thing which saves him is his courage and bravery. A slight weakness brings an end to his career and life. He wins the loyalty and devotion of his followers only because he appears to be bold and courageous. The more he difies law, the more he is respected.

As a dacoit challenges the state authority, he sets up an organisation parallel to the state institutions. He issues letters known as. *Parwana* or *Chithi* to the *Zamindars*, government officials and small traders to pay him a certain amount. Issuance of such letters asserts the authority of the dacoit and challanges the government's power. Usually, it is difficult to understand the dacoit's point of view because once he is declared outlaw he is expelled from the organised society and becomes a non-entity. All his activities are judged through the official, state's point of view. Therefore, he is regarded as a dengerous person who not only disturbs the norms and traditions of a society but vowes to wipe them out altogether. Thus, his activities become anti-state and anti-law. The authorities, therefore, in order to assert the state control and to maintain law and order, unleash all powers to crush the dacoit. As long as the dacoit groups remain active, the state feels uneasy, only a complete victory re-estabilishes the state's authority.

Usually the state authorities declare the dacoit the enemy of the society and label him as cruel, oppressor, and a man without mercy, ignoring the reasons which force a man to abandon a normal life and to rebel against the government and the society.

During the British period there were a number of peasant rebellions. The British authorities used terms which justified their actions against the rebels. First the rebels were called dacoits, in which case there was no question to negotiate with them or to know their point of view. The only punishment for a dacoit was either capital punishment or life imprisonment. When the British government used the term of "dacoit village" it indicated the entire population of a village united in resistance to the armed forces of the state. The term "contagion" showed the enthusiasm and solidarity generated by an uprising among various rural groups.

Haunted by the police and declared outlaw, a dacoit has to have his relations with the peasantry. Only peasants can provide him help and security against the police. To win their support and sympathy he distributes money among the poor and helps them against the high handedness of the *Zamindars* and the police. He also resorts to violent methods in case of any betrayal. Thus, a dacoit is loved and awed by the simple peasants.

For a bandit there is a problem as to how to spend the money. Living in a forest or desert away from the urban centers there is little outlet for the money which he gets at the risk of his life. That is the reason that he lavishly spends it on food, on mistresses, as bribery or as gifts to his followers and the poor peasants.

To condemn a dacoit is easy, to understand him is difficult. There are very few who earned name and fame in history while most of them just went into oblivion in the files of the state chronicles.

PEASANT REBELLIONS IN SINDH

The Arab conquest brought a new foreign element as a ruling class to Sindh. To keep the country under their rule a two pronged policy was adopted by the Arab rulers: to get the collaboration of the local chiefs and to deal sternly with those who refused to accept their authority. The same policy was followed by other foreign invaders. The Arabs were succeeded by the Sumras and the Sammas; the latter were overthrown by the Arghuns from Afganistan. The Arghun occupation of Sindh greatly changed the political, social and economic condition of Sindh. The difference between the locals and foreigners became distinct and the Iranians and Turkish nobility ruled over the country while the locals became their subjects.

The Arghuns, Turkhans, and later on the Mughals, excessively imposed taxes on the peasantry to get as much wealth as possible within a short span of time. The peasantry, unable to meet the demands of the administration, revolted against the government. The administration, unaccustomed to the modes of production of Sindh and unaware of the problems of the peasants, used force to collect revenue. The result was that after quelling a rebellion there was shortlived peace but the peasants never compromised on their demands and rebelled against the administration's highhandedness time and again.

Writing on the condition of the peasants, a 17th century historian Yusuf Mirak, the author of the *Mazhar-i-Shahjahani* writes: "All the peasantry of the region of Sehwan, and indeed most from the region of Bhakkar. . . pull out the roots of this grass, which is known in Sindhi as *bud*. . . These people live mostly in these roots until the following year. Had this grass not existed in the region of Sehwan. . . Not a single human being would have survived."

Under these circumstances, the approach of the peasants was to resist in case of weak administration and to remain submissive under a stern governor. The administration handled the problem of rebellion with the help of military force. Yusuf Mirak suggested that mischievous and intractable elements could not be subdued adequately without the blows of the sword. Mirza Ghazi, the Turkhan ruler of Sindh, advised the

Sehwan administration about the Sameja tribe, "Sameja should be punished severely, wherever those accursed ones turn, you must pursue them and put them to death, capture their families and confiscate their cattle."

Writing on the peasants and tribal rebellions, the contemporary historians, sympathise with administration, terming the peasants contumacious, recalcitrant, imprudent, accursed, wretched, freebooters and bandits, and justified the barbaric actions and inhuman punishments as the only alternative to put down their rebellions. Here is the brief description of some of the rebellions of the peasants and the tribes and how the administration handled them.

1. During Shah Beg Arghun, the Machis of Sehwan rebelled. The Shah killed all of them, destroyed their families, captured all their cattle, and pulled down their houses.

2. The rebellous chiefs of the Dhareja tribe were brought to Bhakkar. When Shah Beg asked Qazi Qazin for advice, he told him, "The land of this country was damp and abounded in thorns; one should always keep a hoe in one's hand." On hearing these words, all the chiefs were killed.

3. In the Pargana of Kakri, the Mangneja tribe revolted against the excessive demand of taxes. On the approach of the royal army, they abondoned their homes and left the region.

4. In Darbella two clans of Sameja, the Rajpal and the Bahan refused to pay revenue. The royal army crushed them. After that they became submissive.

5. In the Pargana of Jatoi, a number of Baloch tribes adopted hostile attitude towards the administration... Shah Beg taking action against them said, "fire of that people should be quenched with the temper of sword." Therefore, in a planned action, the Shah exterminated 42 villages of the Baloch and restored peace (It is what the historians believed).

6. In the Pargana of Chandukiya (Larkana) whenever the peasants rebelled, they sent their families and cattle to the nomad tribes and themselves retired to the forests.

In other parts of Sindh, especially in Sehwan, the Arghuns, Turkhans, and the Mughal administrations continuously fought battles against the rebel peasants and tribes. They maintained peace only with the help of the army and to control the rebellions built check posts throughout the country.

This policy retained a distance between the ruling classes and the peasants. Seldom the peasants were treated humanly. They were only expected to pay taxes regularly and be loyal and submissive. This policy of repression remained successful as long as the administration afforded the expenses of the army. Once the income from the agriculture declined (because of the oppression of the peasants), it became difficult for the administration to sustain a large army. So, in the later Mughal period, the whole administration collapsed and an era of anarchy erupted in Sindh.

THE ROOTS OF BANDITRY

The roots of banditry can be traced in the history of Sindh. The peasantry rebelled against the policy of taxation, while the nomad tribes plundered and looted the peasantry and threatened not only the administration but the people as well. The author of *Mazhar-i-Shahjahani* gives a number of examples of such dacoities. For instance, the Sameja tribe of Sehwan had the habit of stealing. They carried away cattle and killed anybody who came in their way. "When a village has been attacked and devastated by the Samejas, the rehabilitation of the people in their original habitat becomes impossible."

In the Pargana of Takar, Chandiyo tribe used to kidnap people, steal cattle and carry off the peasants children whom they later sold. In the Pargana of Thatta the Sameja Dal tribe plundered villages and extorted money from the peasants. To sum up, it was the practice of the nomad tribes all over Sindh to attack villages, and whenever they could, to waylay the merchants and the caravans.

Besides these nomad tribes, the *Zamindars* were also engaged in banditry and whenever they sensed that the administration was weak, they attacked each other and plundered rival villages.

In rural areas, where the administration was not effective, the *Zamindars* employed their own bandits to harass the rivals and to defend their own property. Therefore, the rural structure of the Sindhi society was the main cause of dacoity in the past. The same feudal structure of Sindh is now harbouring the bands of bandits. All the leading feudal families have their own army of thugs to harass their *haris* and rivals. In the past, to render a loss to a rival it was the practice to steal his cattle. Now the tactics are the same but instead of stealing cattle, they kidnap men and demand ransom which has become more profitable than cattle-lifting. So there are two types of bandits in Sindhi; one, those who are patronised by influential landlords and as such they are used to damage the property and the reputation of the rivals. Two, those who have formed their own independent bands and have made it a lucrative business.

However, in all cases the dacoits have to make good relations with the landlords of the area and the local administration since it is only with their help that they can operate freely. The current *modus operandi* is that they gather all the information about the status and wealth of the kidnapped person before hand. Two years back a merchant was kidnapped from Hyderabad, on his release he told that the dacoits knew all about his accounts in the bank, even those which he had kept secret from his family. Operating on these sound footings the kidnapped person's family has to pay the demanded ransom. Usually the negotiation are conducted through landlord of the area and mostly the intermediary landlord gets his percentage in the ransom money.

In the beginning the victims of the dacoits were small landlords, merchants, professionals such as doctors, engineers and government officials but now the situation has changed because the resources of such victims are easily exhausted and with the growing number of dacoits, their demand of ransom has increased. The result is that sometimes a big landlord and his peasants are robbed. Similarly, the dacoits who found nothing in the villages have started to attack small towns. Recently Mehran Sugar Mills was besieged by the dacoits who demanded exorbitant money as ransom from the Mills authorities. The practice to waylay the passenger busses has also become common. It is possible that if it is not checked, the big cities would become their next targets.

To combat the police and to defend themselves, the dacoits have formed their own organisations and have office-bearers who control the activities of different bands.

To facilitate the working the organisation has allocated different areas to different groups. So far, no racial and linguistic discrimination is observed and their victims include Sindhis, Punjabis and Mohajirs. In the absence of any law and order, the bands of dacoits are supreme in the rural areas and issue orders to petty Zamindars and even to the police to fulfil their demands. Whenever they raid a village, most of their victims are peasants who are robbed, killed, and the womenfolk are dishonoured. Therefore, the bands are not on the model of classic bandits who used to help the peasants

monetarily and defended them against landlords and police. Now the landlords and their families are spared as against the common peasant. Similarly, the Sayyids are not mistreated and usually freed without ransom.

The phenomenon of dacoity is not new in rural Sindh, the only difference is that now the dacoits are more organised than ever before with modern weapons and thus pose a serious challenge to the police and the army.

How could this problem be solved? That's the main question. There are two appraoches; in the classical approach the emphasis is on the exemplary punishment and adoption of headline administrative measures to wipe out the bands of dacoits. Going by this method, the police might partial success but to eliminate banditry is not possible. The other solution however does not seem palatable to the ruling classes. A complete restructring of the rural society by weakening the power of the feudal lords. There is quite a lot of land in Sindh which is possessed by few families. If such land is distributed among the peasants, it would change the whole society and help eliminate banditry, because the root causes are unemployment and injustices of the landlords and high-handedness of the administration. To eliminate these distressing causes would mean to give a dignified place to the common man in the society.